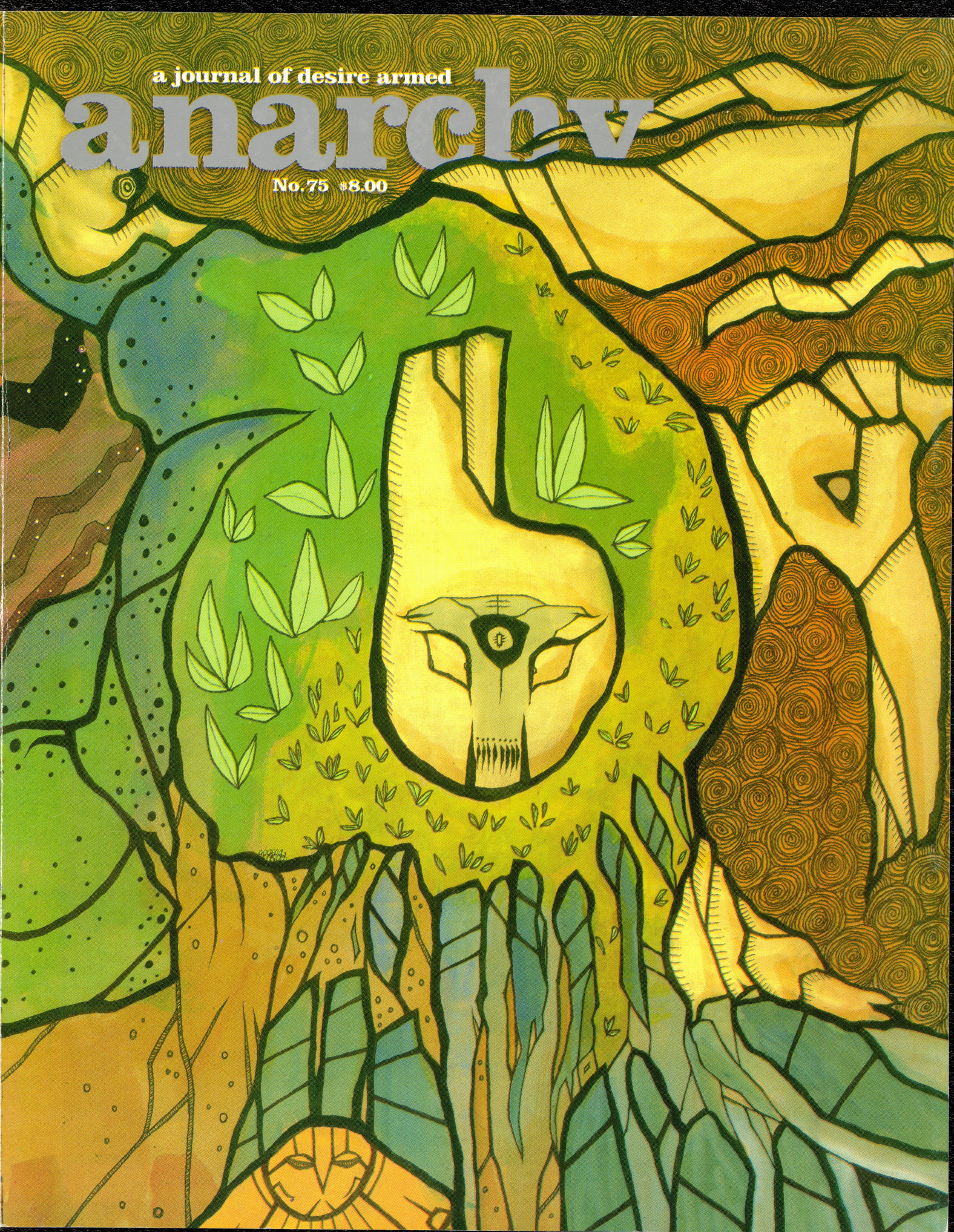


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Making Anarchy Palatable

ANARCHISTS CAN NO LONGER BE credibly ignored in public discourse, but the distasteful trend of making anarchism more palatable for mainstream consumption received an enormous boost in the dwindling days of Occupy. Of the non-anarchist books published in the past three years that have dealt with the Occupy phenomenon, almost all of them deal with its New York incarnation, with perhaps a few nods to other places. Most of them have ignored the more troubling (to them) Occupy Oakland, where the national trend was upset by the continued presence of many people (not just anarchists!) who scandalously defended themselves against the police (both external and internal) and on occasion broke a few windows. The apoplectic denunciations of all anarchists from progressives like Chris Hedges and Todd Gitlin eventually became tempered by less frenetic commentators merely trying to split the uncontrollables from those who condemned Black Bloc tactics. With the publication of *Thank You, Anarchy* by the University of California Press (\$25 for 200 paperback pages, again, almost exclusively about New York, and written by the driving force behind the very *not* ironically titled waging-nonviolence.org), the truncating of supposedly anarchist practice into an inoffensive package for an allegedly alternative political sphere has now reached an annoyingly predictable low point.

Once the more general complaint about diversity of tactics (either deliberately or ignorantly misunderstood as a directive to Fuck Shit Up) is exhausted, the next complaint is that the presence of the Black Bloc brings repression down on other participants, and/or makes it easy for

undercover cops to infiltrate the event. The more crass and demagogic leftists just accuse the Black Bloc of being provocateurs... This line of reasoning shows a monumental lack of awareness of the role and function of police when confronted with any kind of (mild or wild) public dissidence.

Infiltration by cops is normal; anyone who believes otherwise is deluded. Most of the people who exposed the existence and extent of COINTELPRO have recently come forward to claim responsibility for making those destructively deceptive antics public. Those documents not only showed the reactionary paranoia of Hoover, but also the eager cooperation of local law enforcement with the designs of the FBI to spy on, infiltrate, sow internal dissent, and otherwise disrupt and neutralize just about any group that was for civil rights and against the war in Vietnam, liberal pacifists and (poorly) armed radicals alike. The role of law enforcement is to maintain the status quo, and even the smallest, most innocuous, unthreatening, and disorganized dissent is enough to get cops interested and mobilized. As unbelievable as it may seem for left-liberals and social democrats, cops — even in a democracy — will infiltrate, mislead, threaten, harass, frame, and even murder anyone they want, for whatever reason, and as a matter of course. They didn't need the Black Bloc (or, as it was called then, the Action Faction) as an excuse in the 60s and 70s, and they don't need the Black Bloc as an excuse today. Blaming the Black Bloc for the standard operating procedures of the police is as dishonest as it is unimaginative.

That alleged alternative put forward by the non/anti-anarchist champions of Occupy is

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a left-liberal/social-democratic realm, where democracy (representative always, with different levels of lip service paid to a so-called direct form — if absolutely necessary) remains the dominant ideological underpinning of another world being possible. For actual anarchists, however, that's no alternative at all; promoting capitalism with a more human face ("People Before Profits"), and government with more voluntary participation ("This is What Democracy Looks Like" and "We Are the 99%") are absurdities no more plausible for their endlessly droned repetition. The idea that anarchists are merely extreme democrats who adhere to the principles of Nonviolence™ remains an unfortunately (im) potent legend. The actions of plenty of people who identify themselves as anarchists make them more obviously frustrated liberals and impatient social democrats: people who, while publicly unhappy with what seem to be aberrant excesses to their populist critiques, maintain a naive belief in the ameliorative potential of legislation, and an unquestioned respect for the sanctity of private property and the armed gangsters who serve and protect it. There's nothing recognizably anarchist about that.

Mainstreaming our ideas comes with too high a price. Professional activists and celebrities carve out niches for themselves as they tussle for attention and respectability, all the while obscuring the anarchist principles of definitively destroying capitalism and the state through direct action, voluntary cooperation, and mutual aid. The remaking of these tactics into their own skewed image through mainstream — and much alternative — media makes direct action look an awful lot like lobbying, voluntary cooperation an awful lot like electoral alliances, and mutual aid an awful lot like charity. There's nothing anarchist about that either. (A)

On the Cover:



Kelly Porter

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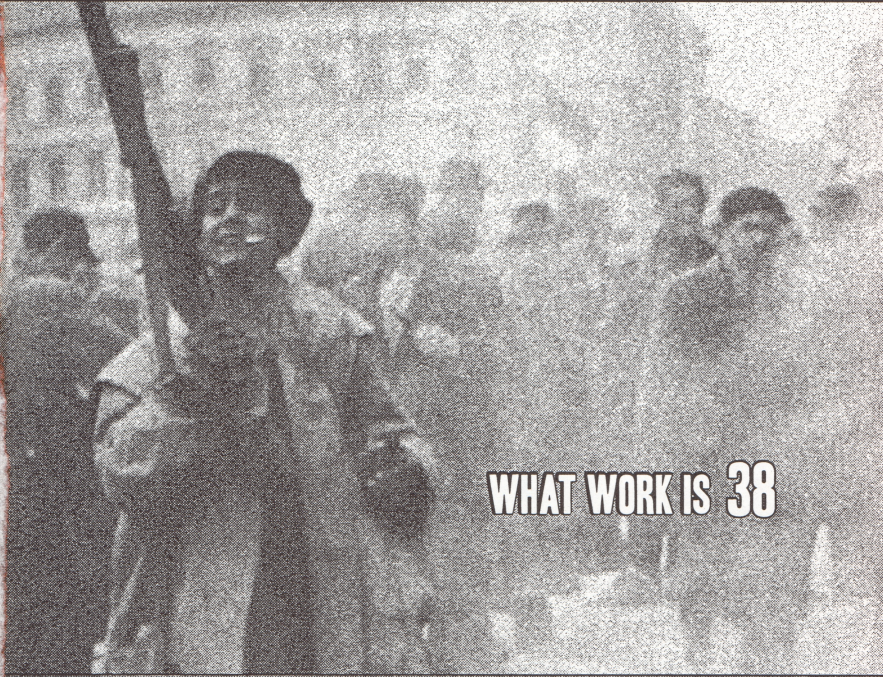
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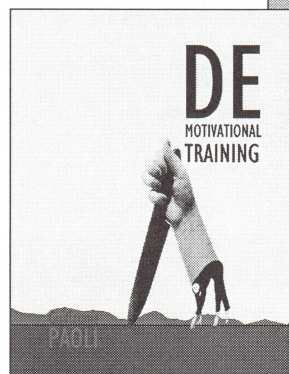
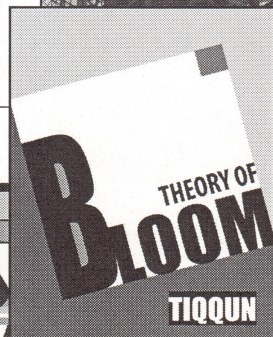
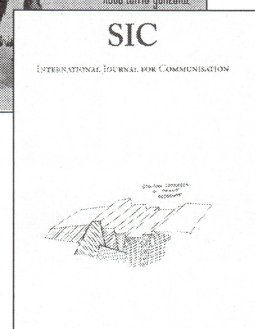
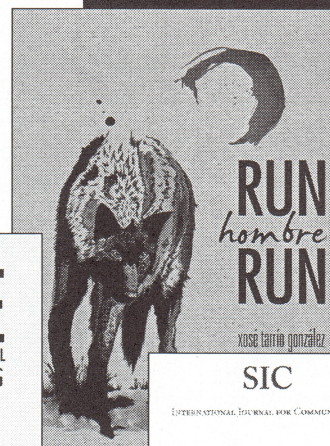
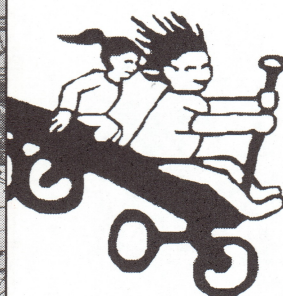
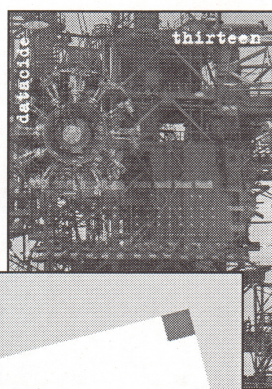
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WELCOME TO ISSUE 75. SOMETIMES WHEN ANARCHISTS HAVE BEEN arrested or otherwise confined in the past forty years, the state inadvertently gives us great slogans — or in the internet age, memes. For the centenary of Haymarket in Chicago in 1986, most of those arrested at an action were charged with Mob Action Against the State, which for most of us who were there or who heard about it at the time, was a fantastic phrase to put on zines and t-shirts. Recently, New York Grand Jury resister Jerry Koch was released after eight months detention for refusing to give information about radicals to the FBI. The judge deemed that further incarceration would be useless, and in releasing Koch wrote, “Koch has chosen to remain in contempt — indeed, he promises continued and endless contempt.” Thanks Judge Keenan, for giving us another one with a nice ring to it: Continued and Endless Contempt it shall be!

Reading through this issue you may notice a historical theme, which was mostly inadvertent. Our essays begin with an exploration of the uses of boredom and anxiety in social control. Bob Black, in a 30th anniversary response to a recent anarcho-workerist commentary on his (in)famous essay *The Abolition of Work*, takes us on a tour of the ruins of European Marxism and the continued problem of work. This is followed by Uri Gordon’s critique of radicals using the logic of the state and its historical documents and ideologies to shoot themselves in the foot. And why does history matter? Lawrence’s column examines the use of history. We top it all off with a survey on your historical knowledge... good luck!

We’ve added a few new artists throughout our slightly expanded issue, including our friend Justin Clark, who passed in 2009, a kindred spirit who is sorely missed. Thanks again to Bernard Dumaine for sharing his artistic collaborations, and introducing us to even more artists. Special thanks to Kelly Porter for his continued support, and his wrap-around cover, which we found particularly inspiring. We’re always happy to get to know more artists who’d like to get their work in print — contact us if you have some art you’d like to submit.

Sadly, we have no embarrassments column in this issue. This was not for lack of crappy anarchist discourse, but because we didn’t have room. If you find you can’t do without at least one example, we recommend looking at Chomsky’s essay in *In These Times*.

Also, you may have noticed in our last issue that our subscription prices have been reduced! You can now subscribe for four issues for \$23. We are, of course, continuing to offer pamphlets, books, and t-shirts—just check out the inside back cover for details.

Extra special thanks to Carla Herzblut for her continued support. Ongoing thanks to Little Black Cart for helping us with distro. We would love to see this and future issues in more hands — have any ideas? Please write to us and let us know! Better yet, ask your local infoshop or library to carry *Anarchy*. 

The Spanish Holocaust

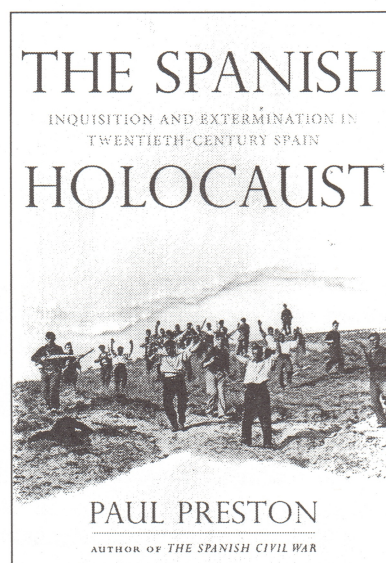
PAUL PRESTON IS A PROFESSOR OF Contemporary Spanish History at the London School of Economics; he is considered an authority on the subject, and woe to the upstart who would dare to call into question either his integrity as a historian, or his ability as a writer of history. As an amateur historian of the Spanish Revolution and Civil War, however, I must take umbrage at his latest excursion into what some might call the minutiae of the Spanish conflict: just who committed what sorts of atrocities (usually defined as the targeted killings of non-combatants), and the corollary topics of just how many deaths the partisans of specific political formations were responsible for.

Why do I consider this topic of minor importance? The contemporary propaganda of the Francoists and the Republicans (if you'll pardon the pun) did the topic to death, each side emphasizing the scope and horror of the other side's misdeeds, often going so far as to blame the other side for the killings they had in fact perpetrated themselves. The Francoists blamed the near-obliteration of the town of Gernika (Guernica) on "the Reds," when it was obvious to virtually every observer that the Nazi Condor Legion had sent in several waves of bombers to destroy the town with incendiary explosives, and had afterward sent in fighters to strafe those who evacuated the village. The Republicans could blame fifth columnists, common criminals, and above all, "uncontrollable elements" (a euphemism for anarchists) for extrajudicial executions they both supported and condemned. The moral outrage of Spaniards and

non-Spaniards to the waves of interpersonal violence away from the battlefield was frequently addressed in accounts written at the time, and the same concern (whether written with one-sided dishonesty or hand-wringing apologies) continues in just about every mainstream (and here I mean bourgeois as well as socialist) history.

The best, shortest analysis is undoubtedly that which appears in *The War and its Shadow*, by Helen Graham (Canada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies/Sussex Academic Press, 2013). Despite Graham's championing of the politics of the right-wing Socialist Juan Negrin (her primary project seems to be to prove, all evidence to the contrary, that Negrin was *not* a tool of the Stalinists), her considered opinion on the issue of atrocities is this: "The military authorities, as the supreme political authority in rebel Spain, could have stopped the extra-judicial killing, for there was no collapse of public order as had occurred in Republican territory. But instead they chose to harness the violence, and with it the idea of a crusade that had originally emerged from popular conservative milieux" (48).

Virtually all studies of the Spanish war and revolution similarly point to the qualitative and quantitative differences (in terms of intentions, actions, and consequences) between the extra-judicial killings from the Right and the Left. Partisans of the Left (like Graham and Preston) generally invoke the breakdown of social constraints due to the day-to-day repressive governmental functions being made redundant in the Republican zone (most Civil Guards had come out on



The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain

by Paul Preston

WW Norton, 2012

700 pages; cloth. \$23.95

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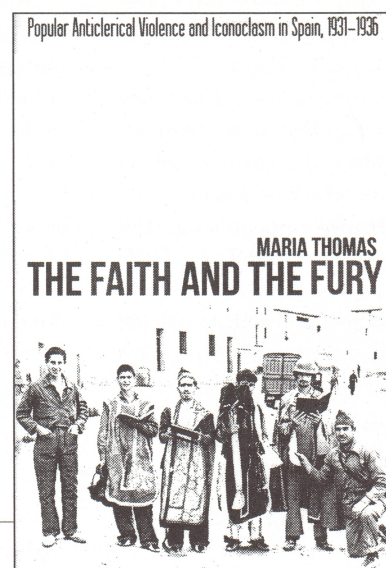
The Faith and the Fury: Popular Anticlerical Violence and Iconoclasm in Spain, 1931-1936

by Maria Thomas

Canada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies/Sussex Academic Press, 2013

260 pages; cloth. \$74.95

Review by Lawrence Jarach



the side of the Francoists, and the much smaller Republican-created Assault Guards, while predominantly loyal to the Republic, was limited to major urban areas), and scores — both old and new — being settled by people for whom carrying arms was now normal. The subtle and not-so-subtle digs at the anti-statist culture promoted by the CNT and FAI (the latter scurrilously referred to by Preston as “the activist or terrorist wing of the anarchist movement” in the Glossary, p. 532) is obvious; only criminals and anarchists (the ubiquitous “uncontrollables”) were involved in such lamentable violence — the implication being that if/when the anarchists were brought under control by a strong Republican state, the embarrassing interpersonal and anti-clerical outrages would be stopped. As Preston makes quite clear — inadvertently showing why the anarchists were isolated from the beginning and why their erstwhile Popular Front allies were constantly trying to split the politicians off from the “extremists” — the institutional Left, aside from being delusional about the intentions of France and England (the “Western democracies”), was anti-revolutionary from the start:

despite the crisis of state authority provoked by the military coup and the consequent extra-judicial abuses, the Republican authorities tried to curb the extremist atrocities and to rebuild the state. The militias and most left-wing parties and trade unions were determined to annihilate the representatives of the Church, the army, the upper class and the non-liberal bourgeoisie. In other words, they aimed to create a revolutionary society to combat the military/fascist state. However, the Republican establishment and the bulk of the Socialist and Communist parties stood out against it because they understood that the Republic needed the backing of the Western democracies and that required law and order. Accordingly, they tried to recreate the structures

that would permit a multi-class democracy. However, the determination of the extremists rendered the task immensely difficult.” (266)

By way of marked contrast, the mass murders carried out by the Right were most definitely not the result of a breakdown of order; in fact, the right’s attempted coup was partially justified by a goal of tightening social order, so their use of summary random and targeted assassination can be understood

the primary problem of Preston’s enormous study occurred prior to publication, when he decided to abandon being a historian in favor of being a chronicler of unrefined data

as part of a generalized martial ethos as well as policy of creating, maintaining, and extending terror toward people who were treated as a conquered population. The massacres carried out by the military authorities in the Nationalist zone were the official policy of an embryonic state that was meant to be centralized, hierarchical, and Catholic. The physical and intellectual elimination of rebellious workers and peasants, of regionalists, and of free-thinkers, atheists, Freemasons, and Reds was a deliberate strategy (called *limpieza*, purification) during the war and throughout the Franco years.

While by no means original in his use of the analogy, Preston seems only to have invoked the Nazi policy of exterminating sub-humans as a way to generate more interest in his book than is warranted by its actual contents; the term *Holocaust* is meant to evoke moral outrage and immediate condemnation, not a critical examination of the raw data. Regardless of the naked brutality of the Nationalists when dealing with their (perceived) opponents, and what amounted to an explicit state (-in-the-making) policy of eliminating the very ideas as well as the bodies of those opponents, Preston’s numbers don’t add up to a genocide against workers and peasants — besides, there had to be someone left to have their labor exploited! The primary problem (and I’m not the first to call attention to it) of Preston’s enormous study occurred prior to publication, when he decided to abandon being a historian in favor of being a chronicler of unrefined data.

Historians examine documents that exist from particular eras and interpret them to make them understandable their readers and students; a good historian will create a palpable sense of the period under investigation, using both official records and diaries, memoirs, media reports, and other first-person accounts of the times. Good history is engaging, creating a sense of connection or identification between a reader and those who appear in the history; bad historians write dull studies that list important people (usually ruling class men) and events that occurred on particular dates. Preston’s previous material on Spain has been primarily of the good variety, although flawed due to his loyalty toward the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Party). Using newly available memoirs and court records (but never critically examining their origins, comparing their observations with other contemporary sources, or questioning individual motivations) by various conservatives, Catalanists, and right-wing socialists, Preston, after properly assigning the

primary responsibility for the detaining, torturing, maiming, and execution of non-combatants on various characters of the political Right (chapters 5 and 6), shifts his focus to the Left (chapters 7 through 10). In doing so, he resurrects the nightmare image of the uncontrollable criminal anarchist murderer in order to secure his double-pronged thesis: partisans and activists of the PSOE and the UGT (their allied trade union), being good statist and promoters of law and order, could not have been involved in such horrors on any appreciable scale, because it was primarily the Spanish anarchists who were the moral equivalents of their homicidal rivals among the Nationalists. Indeed, Preston spends almost the entirety of chapter 7, "Far from the Front: Repression behind the Republican Lines," cataloguing the alleged violent excesses of the anarchists (which naturally pale in comparison, the

anarchists not having the same kind of access to repressive institutions like the Church and the military to draw on).

So while Preston is semi-supportive of "power in the streets [being] assumed by the armed workers who had contributed to the defeat of the rising," at the end of the same paragraph, he laments

when someone's conclusions are not borne out — or clearly contradicted — by the facts they themselves have produced, the most generous way of referring to their research is "flawed"

that "in the chaos created by the disappearance of most of the conventional structures of law and order, there was also an element of sheer criminality," which was "born of the unleashing of the worst instincts [sic!] of those who took advantage of the removal of social restraints" (221). Here we have

the banal statist prejudices which posit that the first thing people (not just anarchists!) would do in the absence of police, courts, and jails would be to go on murderous rampages, rampages that are somehow kept to a minimum — since they are certainly not prevented! — by the supposedly deterrent

presence of cops. Preston offers no discussion on the role of the patrols of armed workers keeping revolutionary order — we can debate what that actually looked like in practice, but the general arming of work-

ers has been a revolutionary tactic since at least the time of the Paris Commune (not coincidentally when the usual lies were spread about atrocities against priests, cops, and military officers).

Yet when faced with the actual evidence, Preston can only lamely say in the penultimate paragraph that "The correlation between CNT-FAI strength



and the nature of extrajudicial repression is far from clear" (258). It would be easier to take this statement, supported by Preston's own previous research, more seriously if he hadn't spent the entire chapter (almost 50 pages) trying to prove that there was a *precise* correlation, almost certainly having to do with the automatic depravity of those who called themselves anarchists. When someone's conclusions are not borne out — or clearly contradicted — by the facts they themselves have produced, the most generous way of referring to their research is "flawed." The less generous way to refer to the researcher is "liar."

Which brings us to Maria Thomas, one of Preston's students, who manages to refute almost the entire basis of his anti-anarchist calumny in one sentence: "Both Toledo and Ciudad Real, where the UGT-FNTT was the dominant form of worker organization, lost higher proportions of their clergy than either Barcelona or Valencia" (88). A serious downside of Thomas' analysis, however, is that she constantly refers to the "millenarian" aspects of anarchist ideas and practices, even going so far as to write, "The theory that

Spanish anarchism became a kind of 'substitute religion' for its followers seems plausible in this context," and that "Anarchism's strict ethical code and ascetic lifestyle replaced — while simultaneously melding with — a Christian morality which the Church had distorted and corrupted" (37). It's somewhat surprising that in a modern (post-Marxist?) context, someone could still insist on repeating this hokum from Hobsbawm's *Primitive Rebels* — which by now should be thoroughly discredited as the Stalinist anti-anarchist/anti-peasant bigotry it is, and which, therefore unsurprisingly, doesn't appear in Preston's bibliography. Some other, more plausible theory about the attraction of anarchism to the rural poor needs to be developed by researchers, perhaps something like, oh I don't know, the appeal of the principle of direct action — especially the (re-) occupation of land and the public burning of property and debt records that had traditionally accompanied agrarian anarchist activism — that would offer peasants and seasonal laborers a return to collective/village-based land use instead of them being continually divided, displaced, expelled, beaten, and murdered by

ever-encroaching landlords, their foremen, and the Civil Guard — and by the Communist-led military formations that forcibly disbanded and suppressed the agrarian collectives in Aragon in the summer of 1937.

Perhaps the greatest irony — or perhaps not, if the laziness of academic bureaucrats is as unremarkable as the laziness of those in other endeavors — is that Preston himself is the Series Editor of the Canada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies, and wrote the Series Introduction that appears in Thomas' (and Graham's) book. Even though Preston's scope in *The Spanish Holocaust* is broader than Thomas' focus on specifically anti-clerical actions, it is simply not credible that Preston would be unfamiliar with Thomas' (and Graham's) analysis of the relevant evidence that has at least partial relevance to his own research. The sharing of the usual anti-anarchist prejudices of mainstream academics keeps Preston from noticing the counter-evidence from Thomas; similarly, it keeps Thomas from noticing that Hobsbawm's patronizingly insulting anarcho-millenarian thesis is no longer taken seriously by any reputable scholar. In any case, they should both know better. (A)



Why I Am Not a Scientist

HOW DOES ONE WRITE A CRITICALLY engaged review of a book where all the reviewer wants to do is reprint lots and lots of excerpts? Like many other college students, when I read a book for research, I underlined what I thought were the important passages. Sentences, sometimes entire paragraphs, withered under my pencil (I never liked highlighters, the gaudy yellow or pink a decidedly unwelcome intrusion into the black and white simplicity of the pages), as I tried to suss out the wisdom I knew inhered in professorial prose. After I left the world of academia with a degree in Cultural Anthropology, and came to appreciate the joys of used bookstores, I was glad of my pencil habit (which, after all, could be reversed), and equally repelled at the warnings “underlined” or “as is” under the used price of an object of my potential desire. I no longer underline what I find important or what might be used later as a citation; I have a piece of paper ready to tear up so that I may put a small scrap at the top of the book for something good on the verso, and one on the bottom for something good on the recto. Most of the time these scraps amount to between five and ten percent of the total page count, such pieces adorning the tops and bottoms of my books with irregular ornaments. For *Why I Am Not a Scientist*, the percentage is closer to 40, causing the top and bottom of the binding to puff out slightly, but noticeably, creating uncharacteristic crenellations.

Instead of finding the best citations, I actually started to read the book again from the beginning, skipping the parts where there was a long gap between



Why I Am Not a Scientist: Anthropology and Modern Knowledge

by Jonathan Marks

University of California Press, 2009
325 pages; paper. \$29.95

Review by Lawrence Jarach

those little bits of paper (for example, I passed over almost the entire chapter on creationism). And again, I am faced with the prospect of not being able to figure out how to engage with the book without reprinting excerpts that get Marks' point across with an entertaining mix of pointed critique with delicious irony and sarcasm. But here goes...

The foundational myth of modern European science is that this “new route to knowledge... should be free of not just theology but any ideology whatsoever. Politics, values, ethics — all were to be bracketed off from science... And yet, from its very inception modern science was used to underpin political ideologies” (47). Hobbes, Locke, Newton, Bacon, and yes, even Darwin, the darling of modern scientists everywhere, were all immersed in the various political debates that raged during the times of their respective writings, and in a time when the pursuit of such knowledge was dependent on the largesse of government (obviously unlike our own. Oh, wait...), those interested in this new knowledge were not about to ruffle any of those feathers. Every one of the previously mentioned philosophers had things to say about the removal of the field of acquiring knowledge (soon to be called Science) from what was often called Natural Theology or Natural Philosophy, but few had much to say about the removal of that knowledge from the purview and control of people interested in Power; in fact, it was quite often the opposite. The notion that Science as the disinterested pursuit of pure knowledge, irrespective of where the conclusions point to, is, as Marks says in relation to the contemporary “scornful and condescending” atheist Richard Dawkins, “far from being a ‘view from nowhere’ [that is, a location free of politics, values, and ethics], however, his is a view from somewhere, and a very self-interested somewhere, to boot. After all, you couldn’t expect a scientist to be more candidly humble

about the limitations of science than you could expect a Pontiac salesman to be about the limitations of Pontiacs... It is directly in these folks' interests to have you accept their spiel" (49).

"Science does not begin with the objective collection of data. That would make it a mindless, disorganized activity. Science begins first with a perception of a problem, and then with a decision about the kinds of information that might be appropriate to solving it — both of which are ways that theory, from the outset, constrains and channels the collection of data" (51). And since the perception of a

problem as well as the kinds of information that might be appropriate to solving it are culturally specific, Marks effectively makes the case that the study of science as a cultural endeavor is also appropriate. His sharp eye (and wit) are brought to bear throughout the book, and it is clear that, despite the title (an explicit nod to Bertrand Russell's famous essay "Why I am Not a Christian," which was, as Marks says, a product of Christian society), Marks is a scientist — his field of specialization is biological anthropology, the study of genetics, morphology, and behavior — but not *that* kind of scientist. Which kind of scientist isn't he? The 19th century-grounded positivist, elitist, racist, grant-driven, patriarchal, ethnocentric, data-cooking, Expert on Everything, that's what kind.

To illustrate what sort of scientist he isn't, Marks has to look at those scientists who, in the name of science (or Darwin, using the logical fallacy of appealing to authority), have said and written objectionable things (usually having to do with getting themselves more funding). Plenty of them have conducted experiments and overseen

policies that are deceitful, disreputable, and generally take place in the service of those in power and the maintenance of the political and social status quo, which are also usually tied to the reactionary claims that genes are destiny and therefore should be the overriding factor in analyzing the challenges of social issues like poverty, low birth weight, and athletic performance.

Discussing Thomas Kuhn's famous

scientists retain a shield of impunity that would make the Oakland Police Department blush

"paradigm shift" model of scientific advances, Marks says, "for every Newton, Boyle, Darwin, Freud, Einstein, or Boas there are ten thousand Joe Blows (sorry, *Doctor Joe Blows*)..." (58; emphasis in original). Marks' ironic wit shares much with that of H. L. Mencken, another anti-eugenicist, whom he often cites.

Really I can't do justice to everything in the book, from Marks' biting examination of eugenics and its unquestioned place within the mainstream Euro-American scientific establishment of the early part of the 20th century, to the exposure of the poor track record of experimental malfeasance, hoaxes, and outright falsification that litter the history and practice of science. The establishment of Social Darwinism prior to eugenics as a scientific justification for the continued domestic exploitation of lazy proles as well as the colonial expropriation of feeble-minded non-whites was supplanted in the scientific mainstream by eugenics. The eclipse of that transparently racist science was not due to the discovery of better or more advanced genetic analysis, but primarily to the obvious (and

by the 1940s embarrassing) ideological connections of American eugenicists to the scientific policies of the Nazis, and the term — certainly not the ideology! — fell into disfavor. But not for long; the next generation of reactionary science emerged in the 1970s as sociobiology, an updated justification for keeping women and non-Europeans in their proper place within a scientifically justified permanent hierarchy based on

the Eurosupremacist Survival of the Fittest. Many typically left-wing "anti-science" academics dismissed sociobiology as the right-wing nonsense it was, and by the 1990s (in the wake of the notoriously and

unfortunately popular *The Bell Curve*, yet another excursion into genetic determinism) it had given way to the newly named — but still old-fashioned — evolutionary psychology.

Though the theories and methodologies are different, the epistemology and rhetoric are remarkably continuous. Where the evolutionary psychologists talk about women and men, just substitute "blacks and whites" and you'll see what I mean. Their bodies are different.

Their brains are different. They behave differently.

The social differences are ubiquitous. Sure there are exceptions, but look at the great differences in the averages. Your common sense, or intuition, or folk knowledge was right after all. Those liberal social scientists have been lying to you.

This is evolution, this is real science. If you apply these sentences to race you produce the normative ideas of wealthy Americans in the 1910s and the shrill cries of the segregationists in the 1960s. (251)

And like most forms of discrimination, bigotry, and gender-, race-, and/or class-based prejudice, they are

infused with socio-cultural meaning — most often in the form of scientific reports written by funding-dependent researchers and published by institutions that are run either in the interest of the non-elected branches of government or the private foundations of those with enough wealth to create and maintain the ideological and public rationale behind the existence and extension of that wealth.

In the chapter “Science as Practice” Marks identifies the areas for potential (and actual, with examples) conflicts of interest. They are *political* (“Building weapons for your government makes you complicit in their use”); *financial* (“tobacco companies... sponsored their own scientific research to show... that smoking was actually good for you”); *personal* (“Perhaps the knowledge that you are smart and have successfully risen to a position of authority and respect brings out the worst — indeed criminal — in some people...”); *class-based* (“Scientists...tend to come from very homogeneous backgrounds — from modern or economically developed nations, from families of at least modest means, and from ethnic backgrounds that have traditionally valued advancement through literacy and study... And, of course, they tend to be men.”); and *ideological*, that is, only looking for data that looks like evidence to prove a scientist’s assumptions (95-101). None of these conflicts of interest necessitate the bogus science, data cooking, heretic-hunting, condescension, or other boorish antics of some scientists, but they do go a long way toward explaining why such behavior — in other circumstances and with other actors — would be automatically considered outrageous,

contemptible, and possibly prosecutable. Yet scientists retain a shield of impunity that would make the Oakland Police Department blush.

Marks doesn’t shy away from exposing such ideas and practices within

what puts Marks broadly on our side is his categorical opposition to the scientists, their research, and their commodities that make people’s lives worse

the culture of science, especially in the chapters entitled “The Rise and Fall of Colonial Science” and “Racial and Gendered Science” (chapters 8 and 9). His explanation of race is overflowing with detail and erudition and is unfortunately too long to condense. Here is an excerpt, however, that deserves the space to reprint it:

...by the 1980s a consensus had been reached that races were not accessible to the geneticist because they were not genetically real entities. They were very real, of course, as lived experiences in particular social and political circumstances. But from the standpoint of biology, races were arbitrary aggregates of bioculturally constructed local populations. And the biological distinction between populations were very easy to overestimate. So what is race? Race is an active negotiation between *difference* (which may be biological and objectively measured) and *otherness* (which is subjective and arbitrary). Race involves culturally deciding that some differences are not important and submerging them and deciding that others are important and exaggerating them. Further, to the extent that we can analytically separate and

compartmentalize these, most differences between groups of people are cultural — that is to say, are not genetically based. What isn’t cultural is for the most part polymorphic — that is to say, present in most or all populations in different proportions. What isn’t cultural or polymorphic is mostly clinal — that is to say, differing across human populations gradually as geographic gradients. And what’s left, that isn’t cultural, polymorphic, or clinal, is principally local. That is how humans vary. (242)

HIS ANGLE — Irritated dismissal of geneticists as having anything important at all to say about it — is a refreshing antidote to the triumphalism of the right-wing hacks in the media who rely on typically flimsy data to discredit those commies in academia for their political correctness. His outrage is not reserved for the credulity of the American public (who get most of our science news filtered through the right-wing media), nor necessarily at the bulk of practicing scientists; he is much more annoyed at self-serving, ass-kissing, money-grubbing researchers who are continually trying to maintain their status as experts who are to be believed, and the receivers of an endless flow of grants. Referring to the competition for funding between the Superconducting Super Collider and the Human Genome Project, Marks says

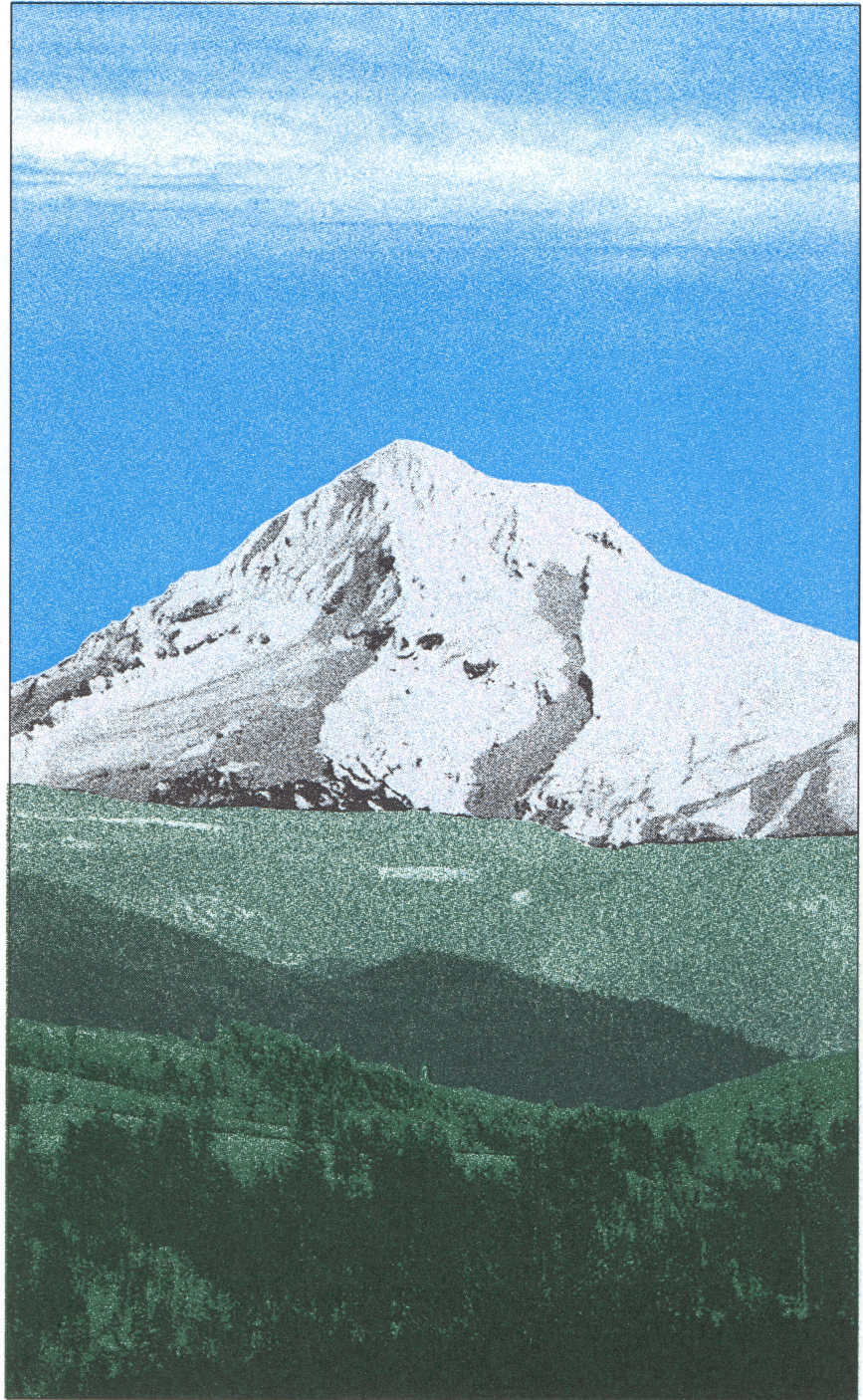
The reasonable question asked by the American public was, Why should we give a fuck about the Higgs boson? Physicists found that question surprisingly difficult to answer. *They* cared about the Higgs boson, so we should too. It might tell us about the structure of matter, after all. It might

tell us about the origin of the universe. Um, maybe we could use that knowledge to build a time machine. What are you anyway, anti-science? (234; emphasis in original).

He then goes on to discuss the two laws that can be observed when trying to understand geneticists: “First, 99 percent of everything a geneticist says in public is code for ‘give me more money.’ Once you internalize that law, the literature on human genetics becomes much more understandable. Second, geneticists always talk about the future as they reach for your wallet” (236; emphasis in original). The link between scientific research and the maintenance and extension of capitalism couldn’t be more clear.

Who’s to blame for all these shenanigans? Well, according to Marks, it’s the scientists. He writes, “I don’t want to be a member of any club where scientific racism is welcome” (260). That seems like a good place to begin a principled critique of the Euro-American scientific mainstream, both in historical terms and contemporarily. He also takes an ethical humanist stance, which, for us crazy primitivist, anti-organizational, post-left anarchists, might not exactly be a badge of honor, but, after all, Marks never claims to be one of us. What puts Marks broadly on our side, if I can be so bold as to induct him into it, is his categorical opposition to the scientists, their research, and their commodities that make people’s lives worse — weapons and GMO seeds, for example.

Marks is an entertaining and witty writer, whose *Why I Am Not a Scientist* is part of a series of other provocative and important books and articles as well as his blog (<http://personal.uncc.edu/jmarks/>), where, in the absence of an academic editor, his vitriol is even more pronounced. He is my favorite anthropologist and historian of science. He should be yours too. (A)



Hood

Eberhardt Press | Portland, Oregon
see facebook page for production notes

Fire and Flames

THE EDITING AND PROOFREADING troubles that plagued AK Press for decades have continually diminished over the years, and they are notably — and thankfully — almost completely absent from its derivative project PM. The cover of *Fire and Flames*, however, presents a glaring bungle, quite at odds with the sensitive translator's explanation for picking a different term. On pages 9 and 10, Kuhn writes: "To this day, there is no standard English translation for the German term *autonom* in the context of the German *autonome Bewegung* (movement). Both 'autonomous' and 'autonomist' have been used [by others], often interchangeably. There are three main reasons why 'autonomous' is used consistently throughout this book," (my emphasis) which he then enumerates, the first of which is the difference between a noun and an adjective, the last two (which are actually the same, so there are really only two reasons) having to do with the *ist* ending tending to describe an adherent to a particular philosophy or ideology — and, as Kuhn points out, "one of the characteristics of the *autonome Bewegung* has always been its rejection of ideological definition." The sub-reason is that the Italian *Autonomia* phenomenon did have a specific ideological framework, "a tradition of libertarian Marxist thought," which is more properly referred to as *autonomist*. This is a fine explanation, yet was completely ignored by the people responsible for the editorial and design decisions for the cover. Most readers will probably not see this as a big deal; by the time one reaches the end of the book, the cover title will have receded from one's memory, the most



Fire and Flames:
A History of the German
Autonomist Movement
 by Geronimo [tr. by Gabriel Kuhn]
 PM Press, 2012
 187 pages; paper. \$19.95

Review by Lawrence Jarach

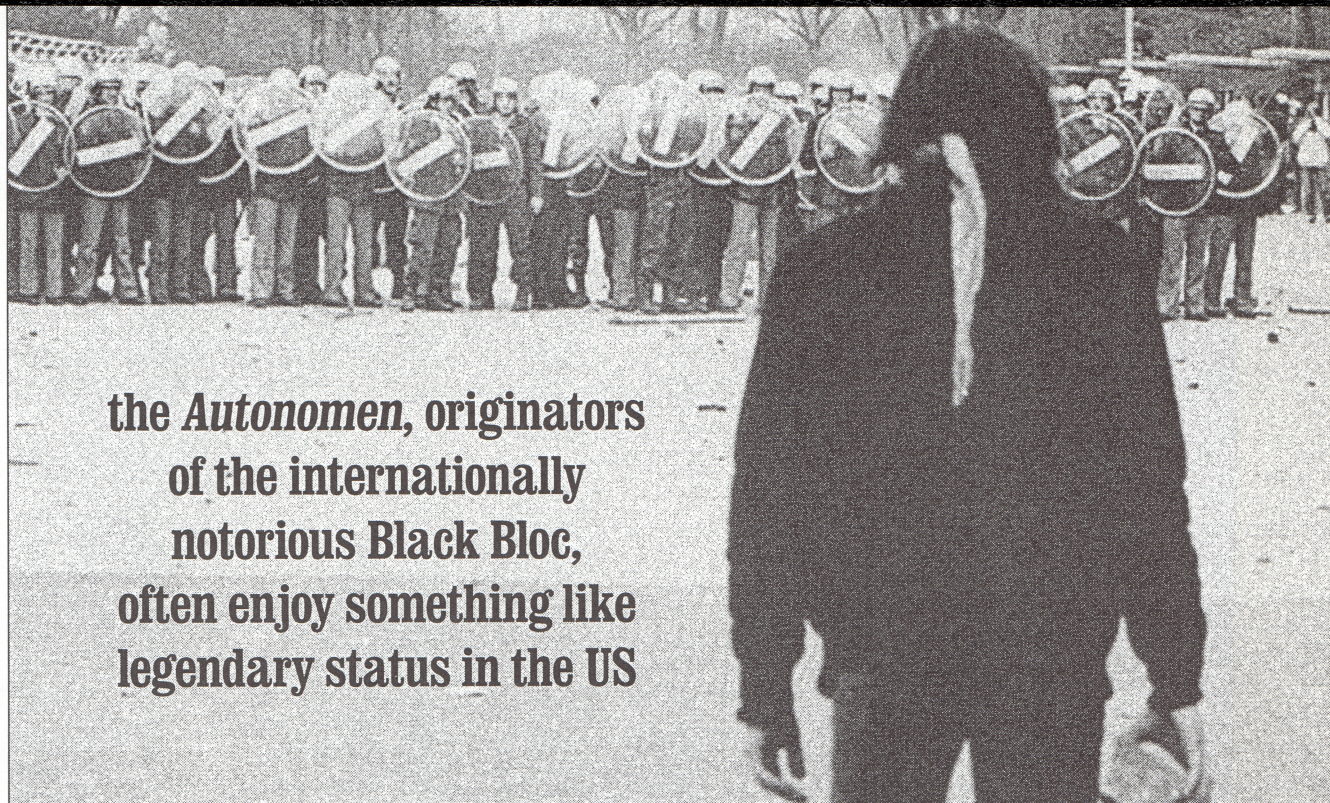
important bits being conveyed in the middle. Still, it's unexpected.

The *Autonomen*, originators of the internationally notorious Black Bloc, often enjoy something like legendary status in the US, certainly at least since Seattle. Being autonomous (meaning most of them are not connected to one specific political tendency, being adherents, to varying degrees, of different strains of Marxism and anarchism) and primarily self-identified as being *against* certain manifestations of domination,

they can be all things to all observers. This is both a strength and a weakness. The strength is that as a self-organized formation, they have no formal membership; their coherence as a recognized tendency is not based on ideological conformity, but on an informal affinity of strategies, tactics, and actions. The weakness is that politically, they are not really coherent; perhaps that's why American anarchists like them so much.

Fire and Flames was the first attempt to situate the *Autonomen* within the history of the German radical left and, as an initial gesture, it's decent. Not great, but a decent first try. The pseudonymous author was taken to task when the book first appeared in 1990 for several omissions and blind spots, the most notable of which was the dearth of women activists, both as a separate tendency allied with the autonomous scene, and as an integral part of it. Cutting him a little slack, readers need to remember that most first efforts are usually tentative and incomplete, so this history needs to be judged as a contribution to the broader understanding of *autonome* (anti)politics, both in German and in English. At least Geronimo has the decency to admit his shortcomings.

In German there are dozens of articles, books, and pamphlets about the *Autonomen*, some of them even by supporters, if not participants. Most of them reflect the political interests of the authors, and, because of the diverse politics that make up the scene, are often analytically uneven. Geronimo seems *not* to have begun a trend of self-critical analysis from within the broader history and context of the radical left, which is unfortunate; that would be more interesting to read than a chronicle of



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self-congratulatory reports of various actions, which comprises the bulk of the aforementioned material.

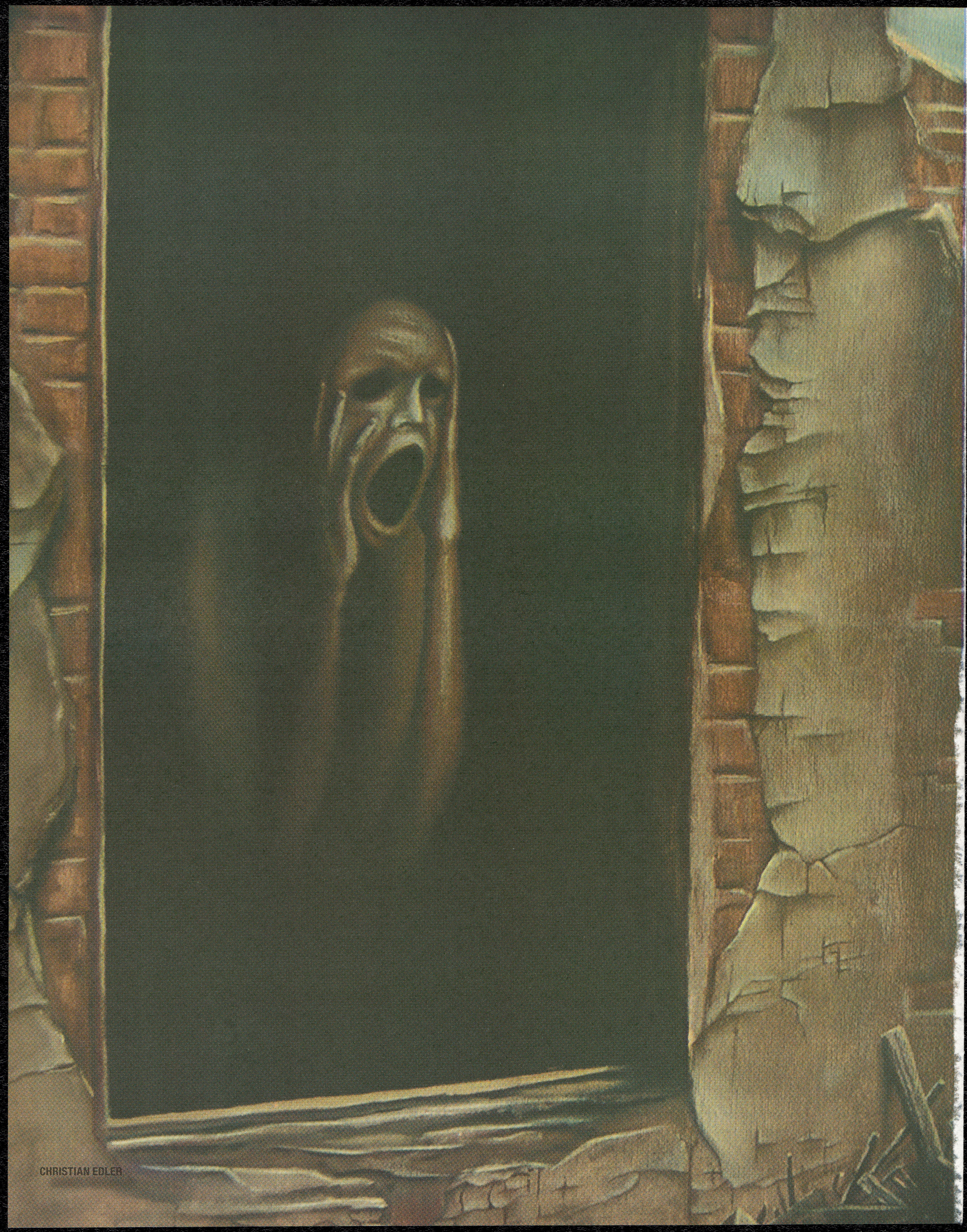
In English there are really only two books on the *Autonomen*: this one, and *The Subversion of Politics* (first published in 1997, reprinted in 2006 by AK) by George Katsiaficas, who, incidentally, wrote the introduction to this translation. The latter, while more rigorous in its analysis as well as taking other European antecedents and counterparts into account, and using a much more academic methodology, also suffers from its own inadequacies. Neither author examines the history of how the West German APO (*Außerparlamentarische Opposition*, extra-parliamentary opposition) formed the basis for the distinctive organizational refusal of representation and an acceptance of political pluralism that characterize the *Autonomen*. In addition, and more pointedly, neither examine how and why activists in the radical left on the border of the GDR (the former East Germany) had an almost inevitable distrust toward/disgust with Marxist-Leninist structures, analyses, and even terminology. The lack of a similar history of Real Existing Socialism directly bordering

either Italy or the Netherlands (the two other main areas of Katsiaficas' study) made an activist tendency analogous to the *Autonomen* in either place unthinkable in the 1980s and '90s.

Geronimo, like other *autonome* authors, takes the experience of a large APO and living next door to Real Existing Socialism for granted; he obviously sees no need to explain it. For this reviewer, however, an outside observer with a life-partner who is a veteran of the scene, the absence of this vital cultural component left me dumbfounded. The other aspect that remains under-examined is the historical distrust of social democracy among German radicals (due primarily to the shameless repression of the German revolution of 1918-19 by Social Democrats in power, enlisting the arch-reactionary proto-fascist Freikorps to smash the Berlin-based Spartakus Rebellion as well as the more anarchist-influenced Bavarian *Räterepublik*), which also underpins the refusal of the *Autonomen* to engage with any sort of party politics, verging on an explicit rejection of the state. Add to that a cynical Denazification process that occurred in both the West and the

East as soon as the war was over, which resulted in many former Nazis being returned to the state apparatus of both countries, and the matrix of a rejection of Marxist-Leninism (especially as embodied in the GDR) and Social Democracy meant that the formation of a radical left that had to look elsewhere was both unique and inevitable.

But it's probably impossible to write a good short history of the *Autonomen*, placing them firmly within this context of a specifically German non-Stalinist activist left; a radical/anarchist analysis of the full politico-cultural context would take at least several pages to explain. And even if it were written — and in English — it's doubtful that fans of the Black Bloc would get much out of it. Let's face it: preferring form over function, most street activists drawn to the various non-German versions of the Black Bloc probably don't care about the history of the *Autonomen* or how and why West German radical activists started to mask up. Protecting a mobile PA system from being smashed or confiscated by the cops is just not awesome enough; it's much more exhilarating to declare Social War and Make Total Destroy. (A)



EIGHT THESES ON THE AFFECTIVE STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENT CONJUNCTURE

BY THE INSTITUTE FOR PRECARIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS

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THIS ARTICLE IS A THEORETICAL EXPLORATION OF THE STRUCTURAL BACKGROUND OF RESISTANCE. THESE THESES ARE INTENDED TO ACCOUNT FOR THE CRISIS OF CONTEMPORARY MILITANCY, WHICH CAN BE SUMMARISED IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

WHY NUMBERS ARE GOING DOWN, AND ALWAYS TOO FEW;

WHY SO MANY PEOPLE ARE SUCCUMBING TO BURNOUT, TRAUMA, AND HOPELESSNESS;

WHY OUR PRESENT TACTICS DON'T SEEM TO BE WORKING (TO WEAKEN THE STATE AND CAPITAL);

A LARGE PART OF THE STRUCTURAL WEAKNESS OF RESISTANCE TODAY COMES DOWN TO THESE THREE PROBLEMS. A DEMONSTRATION OF A FEW HUNDRED IS ALL TOO EASILY KETTLED, MASS-ARRESTED, OR OTHERWISE REPRESSED. AND USING THE USUAL LOGIC OF ACTIVISM, WITHOUT THE FEAR OF PROTESTS AND DIRECT ACTION, THE STATE AND CAPITAL BECOME COMPLETELY OUT-OF-CONTROL. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THEY CAN THEN USE A FREE HAND TO FURTHER INTENSIFY REPRESSION AND CREATE WORSE CONDITIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS.

HENCE THE NEED TO THEORISE THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION, AND DEVELOP NEW APPROACHES WHICH WILL SET FORCES OF STRUGGLE TO WORK AGAIN.





1. THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION IS CENTRALLY DETERMINED BY THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN ACTIVE AND REACTIVE AFFECT.

THE DOMINANT SYSTEM RELIES ON REPRESSION and alienation. This is clearly theorised by the eco-anarchist writer Savage, who argues that human life began with abundance (Sahlins' famous "primitive affluence"), and periodically returns to abundance as each productive system passes a certain limit. But the dominant system — we might say capitalism, technocracy, industrial society, Empire — requires that people be kept in a situation of scarcity. Without scarcity, people cannot be forced to work, conform, compromise, which means that each system has to periodically recreate it. One way of doing this is by spectacular consumption of resources — this is why the pyramids were built. Other ways include wars, mass unemployment, consumerism aimed at insatiable demands, and so on. The crucial point is that the system has to keep us in scarcity — and this means keeping us in a scarcity mindset. In capitalist theories, a situation of scarcity is simply *assumed* (whether as marginal utility, conflicting structural interests, a death drive, Hobbesian human nature, etc). This handily conceals the *social production and reproduction of scarcity*, which is first of all manufactured as an existential orientation, before being unfolded as a material reality.

Many different perspectives in radical politics and the politics of desire speak of a need to return to *active force*. Marx writes of "the fulfilment of the personality... governed by immediate enjoyment and personal needs" (Marx, 269). The Situationists talked about abundance and scarcity in terms of "survival" versus "life." 1960s capitalism gives everything one needs for "survival," but gives no opportunities for "life"; it is a system based on "force-feeding survival to saturation point" (Vaneigem, 98). Autonomists talked about social composition and decomposition. At any time, the creative, active force of the oppressed (which they identify with Marx's "labour") is seeking to recompose itself, to come together and create. Capitalism has to perform a constant labour of decomposition, blocking and

breaking down these emerging connections so as to keep the structure of exploitation intact. The Midnight Notes Collective talk about the constant reappearance of "commons," or spaces of collective expression, and their "enclosure" by capitalism so as to ensure that capital provides the only integration between people. Primitivists talk about a constant conflict between the wild — as inner active force, as well as ecosystems based on such force — and the repressive forces of civilisation which must contain and control it. Kropotkin argues that the "social principle," of voluntary horizontal satisfaction of needs, is constantly in struggle with the "political principle," which breaks down horizontal connections to achieve vertical integration. Hakim Bey argues that an emergent shamanic force of immediacy and fusion with the universe is constantly straining against the limits of any given hierarchical system. Alfredo Bonanno contrasts joyful insurrection with deathly conformity. Feral Faun talks about returning to a childlike enjoyment of the immediacy of life. All of these accounts reflect a common insight: *radical struggle and autonomy depend on active force*.

The concept of active force needs to be explained. One can think of *affect*, *desire*, and *force* as a field. Affects (emotions, bodily dispositions, ways of relating) stem partly from desires, and appear in the social field as forces. Hence there are active and reactive affects, active and reactive desires, and active and reactive forces. The fuel of activism comes from *active affects* of a *positive and affirmative* kind. During periods of mass movements and effective direct action, people feel a sense of empowerment, the ability to express themselves, a sense of authenticity and de-repression or dis-alienation.

For instance, Juris suggests that the social bonding arising from the ups and downs of struggle is one of the reasons that a protest such as the Prague summit protest has the impact it does on participants. His interviewees recount it as a *life-changing* experience. Or, if direct activist commentaries are preferable, let us take the personal account of Pauline Bradley — who tells

us that activism is “better than Prozac” for dealing with depression and psychological problems. She recounts involvement in a social movement (the Liverpool dockers’ struggle) as “emotionally momentous” and as allowing her to move on from feeling “shit.” This activist experience worked where mental hospitals, drugs, and psychiatric labels had failed (Bradley). Or we could look at the accounts of participants in the 2001 *Argentinazo* — a feeling of fear and separation suddenly succumbing to courage. Anecdotal evidence has provided many similar accounts of militant experiences through the years.

if affect is reactive, it is also disempowered, turned against itself, and unable to actively seek transformation of the world. This is the real source of the problems — of informal hierarchy, backbiting, machismo — which undermine so many horizontal spaces, even when there is no apparent structural barrier to anarchy

These experiences are typical of all the current autonomous protest modalities (militant, pacifist, and carnivalesque), as well as of temporary autonomous zones such as those of free parties and raves. At best, what arises is a kind of *peak experience* similar to a “high.” At the very least, this is what sustains activity. For some, such as Hakim Bey, it is the main point of life.

However, such accounts have become rarer in recent years. The conclusion is undeniable that the system has got better at killing the buzz of protest, along with its outer effectiveness. This reflects the growing power of reactive against active affects. Reactive affects — negative, repressive feelings which block emotional

flows — are necessary to make people governable and orderly. They underpin capitalism by creating people who can provide homogeneous, measurable labour. And they underpin the state by creating governable people whose behaviour or social action is predictable. Think of reactive force in terms of Marxist alienation, Situationist deadness or the “cop in the head,” psychoanalytic repression.

Reactive affect requires repression — bodily, emotional, sexual (Wilhelm Reich’s character-armour and affect-blocking are classic examples of this theory). Processes of alienation turn active force into reactive force by blocking, frustrating, and re-channelling it — often by putting separations in place, between parts of ourselves, between one another, between humans and ecosystems, between desire and what it can do. In any reactive system, active forces are trapped in such a way as to prevent their flourishing, budding, or forming connections with other active forces. Reactive forces turn active affects against themselves, tying people’s inner forces in knots, forming blockages and contradictory forces, and pushing certain active affects into inner exile. If affect is reactive, it is also disempowered, turned against itself, and unable to actively seek transformation of the world. A reactively desiring subject will be unable to exercise autonomy, even when the outer conditions are there. This is the real source of the problems — of informal hierarchy, backbiting, machismo — which undermine so many horizontal spaces, even when there is no apparent *structural* barrier to anarchy.

Resistance based on a politics of desire (or more indirectly, on liberation, need, self-expression) seeks to restore active force to primacy. This requires untying the knots and breaking out of the traps set by reactive affect in any given period. An effective strategy or tactic will untie the knots in such a way as to set active affect flowing once more. It might broadly correspond to the *three tasks of schizoanalysis* proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (307-22): breaking down dominant “territorialisations” (or affective structures/connections), finding the inner flows and becomings which drive a particular person’s desire, and reconnecting these flows to the “outside,” forming new social connections.

2. EACH PHASE OF THE DOMINANT SYSTEM HAS ITS OWN DOMINANT REACTIVE AFFECT.

THE DOMINANT SYSTEM PERSISTS BECAUSE IT is able to enforce the continued primacy of reactive over active force, across the social sphere. Each phase of capitalism (and probably of earlier oppressive systems) has a particular reactive affect which holds it together. Each of these reactive affects is disseminated and held in place by a set of *social* apparatuses which sustain an *inner, psychological* repression. This is not a static situation. The prevalence of a particular dominant reactive affect is sustainable only for as long as strategies of resistance able to break down this particular affect and/or its social sources have not been formulated. Hence, capitalism constantly comes into crisis and recomposes around newly dominant reactive affects.

One aspect of every phase's dominant reactive affect is that it is a *public secret*, something that everyone knows, but nobody *admits, or talks about*. This term was used by the Situationists to refer to boredom (the term has parallels in Paulo Freire's *culture of silence* and Gayatri Spivak's *sanctioned ignorances*). As long as the dominant reactive affect is a public secret, it remains effective, and strategies against it will not emerge.

Public secrets are typically *personalised*. This means that the problem is visible at an individual, psychological level — but it is considered to arise only at this level; the social causes of the problem are concealed. For example, “housewife malaise” was visible in the 1950s, it was talked about in women's magazines, even theorised by doctors — but only as an individual problem of maladaptiveness. Similarly, poverty as a brute fact was visible in the nineteenth century, but only as an economic fact.

In effect, each phase blames the system's victims for the suffering that the system causes. And it portrays a *fundamental* part of its functional logic as a *contingent* and localised problem. This blame is connected to the *permanent indebtedness* which has been theorised recently by authors such as David Graeber and the Escalate Collective. As long as people self-blame and feel

inadequate, they can be treated as owing something to the system. In order for personalisation to be sustained, people need to be *socially isolated*. Public secrets are also concealed by discourses which deny them, and by a range of distractions which manage their effects.

In the modern era, the first dominant reactive affect was *misery*. In the nineteenth century, the dominant narrative was that capitalism leads to general enrichment. The public secret of this narrative was the misery of the working class.

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The exposure of this misery was carried out by revolutionary socialists and anarchists. The first wave of modern social movements in the nineteenth century can be seen in many ways as a machine for fighting misery. Tactics such as strikes, wage struggles, political organisation, mutual aid, co-operatives, strike funds, and so on were effective ways to defeat the power of misery by ensuring a certain social minimum. Some of these strategies *still* work when fighting misery, as the revival of solidarity economies and initiatives such as food banks show.

When misery stopped working as a control strategy, capitalism switched to *boredom*. In the 1950s-60s, the dominant public narrative was that the standard of living — which encompassed measures of the Fordist absence of misery, such as average income and consumption, and

access to healthcare and education — was rising. Everyone in the rich countries was happy, and the poor countries were on their way to development. The public secret was that everyone was bored. This was an effect of the Fordist system which was prevalent until the 1980s — a system based on full-time jobs for life, guaranteed welfare, massified consumerism and culture, and the co-optation of the labour movement, in a context where labour was increasingly divided into separate, repetitive tasks. This restructuring of labour away from craft-like activities, towards a deliberately segmented labour process composed of repeatable simple tasks, was central to the generation of boredom. Job security and welfare provision reduced anxiety and misery, but jobs were monotonous. Many people were left asking, “is this all?”

Of course, not all workers under Fordism really *had* stable jobs or security — but this was the core model of work, around which the larger system was arranged. P.M. suggests

that there were actually three “deals” in this phase, with the “B-worker deal” — boredom for security — being the most exemplary of the Fordism-boredom conjuncture (10-27). Today, the “B-worker deal” has largely been eliminated, leaving a gulf between the A- and C-workers (the consumer society insiders, and the autonomy and insecurity of the most marginal), and an altered conjuncture.

When using the term *dominant* affect, this is not to say that this is the *only* reactive affect in operation. The new dominant affect relates dynamically with other reactive affects. Sometimes a new dominant reactive affect *replaces* an old one (a skilled flex-worker such as a web designer experiences anxiety instead of boredom); sometimes it *underpins* old reactive affects, undercutting the resistances to them (a call-centre worker is bored and miserably paid, but anxiety is what keeps her/him in this condition, preventing the use of old strategies such as unionisation, sabotage, and dropping-out).

3-CONTEMPORARY RESISTANCE IS BORN OF THE 1960S WAVE, IN RESPONSE TO THE DOMINANT REACTIVE AFFECT OF BOREDOM.

IF EACH STAGE OF THE DOMINANT SYSTEM has a dominant reactive affect, then each stage of resistance needs strategies to defeat or dissolve this affect. If the first wave of social movements were a machine for fighting misery, the second wave (of the 1960s-70s, or more broadly 1960s-1990s, or even up to the present day) were a machine for fighting boredom. This is the wave of which our own movements were born, which continues to inflect most of our theories and practices.

Most tactics of this era were/are ways to escape the work-consume-die cycle. Situationism pioneered a whole series of tactics directed against boredom, such as *détournement* and the *dérive*. *Autonomia* revealed boredom in the form of the refusal of work and the everyday tactics of resistance, both in the workplace (such as sabotage and go-slows) and against it (slacking off and dropping out). These protest forms were

associated with a wider social process of exodus from the dominant forms of boring work and boring social roles, by means of counter-cultures and alternative ways of life.

In the feminist movement, Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* was important in exposing the structural nature of dissatisfaction. While the “housewife malaise” she discusses had been noted by doctors in the 1950s as depression, distress, and feelings of uselessness, it was only theorised as systemic in the 1960s. Later, further aspects of blockage and dissatisfaction were revealed through consciousness raising, and the texts and actions (from “The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm” to the Redstockings abortion speak-out) which stemmed from it. Similar tendencies can be seen in the Theatre of the Oppressed, critical pedagogy, the main direct-action styles today (carnavalesque, militant, and pacifist), and in movements as late as

the 1990s, such as the free party movement, Reclaim the Streets, DIY culture, and hacker culture (inspired by finding out how things work below the surface). Such approaches set active forces in movement based on their own flows, in new sets of connections.

The critique of boredom can be seen as an undercurrent throughout the period of Fordism (from about the 1920s), for instance in the work of Adorno, Marcuse, Benjamin, and Kracauer. However, the dominant emphasis of social movements continued to be on the question of misery. It was only in the 1960s, however, that the inadequacy of the old frame was recognised. The Situationists declared that “[w]e do not want a world in which the guarantee that we will not die of starvation is bought by accepting the risk

of dying of boredom” (Vaneigem, 6), while Friedan argued that housewife malaise “cannot be understood in terms of age-old problems of... poverty, sickness, hunger, cold. The women who suffer this problem have a hunger that food cannot fill” (37). In these and other cases, the reorientation from misery to boredom was crucial to the emergence of a new wave of revolt. In Paris in 1968, slogans appeared such as “never work — never risk dying of boredom.”

We are the tail-end of this wave. Just as the tactics of the first wave still work when fighting misery, so the tactics of the second wave still work when fighting boredom. The difficulty is that we are less often facing boredom as the main enemy. This, it might be concluded, is why militant resistance is caught in its current impasse.

4. CAPITALISM HAS LARGELY ABSORBED THE STRUGGLE AGAINST BOREDOM.

THE IMPASSE IS A LOCALISED EXPRESSION OF a wider problem. Active forces have once more become blocked within neoliberalism. This arose from the partial recuperation of the struggle against boredom. Capitalism effectively pursued the exodus into spaces beyond work, creating what autonomists have called the “social factory” — a field in which the whole society is organised like a workplace. Precarity is used to force people back to work within an expanded field of labour now including the whole of the social factory.

Many instances of this pursuit can be enumerated. Companies have adopted flattened management models based loosely on the Maoist guerrilla model. Consumer society now provides a wider range of niche products and constant distraction which is not determined by mass tastes to the same degree as before. New products, such

as video-games and social media, involve heightened levels of active individual involvement and desocialised stimulation. The Spectacle has become better than ever at providing powerful, purified emotions through what Brecht terms the “emotional orgy.” Workplace experiences are diversified by means of micro-differentials and performance management, as well as the multiplication of casual and semi-self-employed work situations on the margins of capitalism. Capitalism has encouraged the growth of mediated secondary identities — the self portrayed through social media, visible consumption, and lifelong learning — which have to be obsessively maintained. Various forms of resistance of the 1960s-90s period have been recuperated, or revived in captured form once the original is extinguished (for instance, the nightclub and paid music festival replace the free festival).

5: IN CONTEMPORARY CAPITALISM, THE DOMINANT REACTIVE AFFECT IS ANXIETY.

IF THE PUBLIC SECRET OF THE NINETEENTH century was misery, and the public secret of Fordism was that everyone was bored, today's public secret is that everyone is anxious and over-stressed. Anxiety is the new dominant reactive affect of contemporary capitalism.

Anxiety has always been part of the reactive structure of capitalism. For instance, Reich suggested long ago that hostile contexts cause anxiety, which in turn causes character-armour and political paralysis (Reich, 48, 347; see also Brinton). However, it seems that anxiety has

anxiety is the new dominant reactive affect of contemporary capitalism. One major part of the social underpinning of anxiety is surveillance

spread from its previous localised locations (such as sexuality) to the whole of the social field. All forms of intensity, self-expression, emotional connection, immediacy, and enjoyment are now laced with anxiety. It has become the linchpin of subordination.

Los Ricos and McMarvill astutely capture the *universality* of anxiety in contemporary capitalism — it is difficult to escape even by dropping-out (unlike boredom). The included fear loss of status, the marginal fear exclusion and loss of subsistence, while the excluded and autonomous fear state violence and repression. The dominant reactive affect is all-encompassing; it cannot be escaped either by exodus or by conformity and pecuniary success.

The pervasiveness and inescapability of anxiety creates a generalised feeling of powerlessness — most likely out of proportion to how powerless people really are. In some respects, however, just-in-time production makes the system more vulnerable than ever to such established tactics as blockades, strikes, and sabotage; revolts like the one in the UK in 2011 show how thin the veneer of social control has become.

One major part of the social underpinning of anxiety is *surveillance*. It is easy to think here of the external forms of surveillance which most impinge on autonomous activity — CCTV, police camera teams, the NSA Internet and cell-phone dragnet. These are important parts of the picture, but surveillance is much more pervasive than this. We also need to think about the *performance management mechanisms* through which workers, benefit claimants, students, service users, schoolchildren, prisoners, and so on are constantly tested, assessed, and classified based on small modulations in behaviour or performance. We need to think about the ways in which a neoliberal idea of success inculcates these mechanisms *inside* most of the population, inducing a kind of self-surveillance. These kinds of metrics are now widespread in public and private workplaces, establishing goalposts for satisfactory or excellent performance, which keep people running on a treadmill.

We need to think about how people's deliberate and ostensibly voluntary self-exposure, through social media, visible consumerism, the choice of positions within the Spectacle's field of opinions, also assumes a performance for other people, a performance in a field subject to surveillance. We need to think about what Virilio terms *telepresence*: the temporally immediate but technologically mediated presence of different parts of the world (at least the North) to one another, leading to a kind of immediate, generalised *vulnerability* to the gaze of others. We need to think about the ways in which television, social media, and consumerism inflect how we see one another — and whether the artificial performances we might see on Reality TV (never quite the same as reality, since the cameras are there) are increasingly true of *the whole of social life*. As Baudrillard has argued, consumerism is really a kind of *required performance*, which requires the suppression of real desires so as to appear happy and successful in purely capitalist terms. Credit, and the role of credit checks, is another part of this system. Credit has been used to bridge the gap between wages and consumption in America and Britain since the 1980s, and it provides a



JIMMY SMITH / B. DUMAINE

precarious way to do so, conditional on conformity to criteria of creditworthiness (Gill). There is also the bureaucratisation of public spaces, which leads to interference with, and the criminalisation of, all kinds of autonomous activities (festivals, carnivals, play groups, Food not Bombs, Critical Mass...) on grounds such as risk, security, nuisance, quality of life, or anti-social behaviour.

Underlying this situation of anxiety is the command to communicate. People are compelled to communicate in dominant terms (Lazzarato, 135). The threat against the incommunicable is exclusion. Since everyone is disposable, the system holds the threat of *forcibly delinking* anyone at any time, in a context

consumerism is really a kind of required performance, which requires the suppression of real desires so as to appear happy and successful in purely capitalist terms

where alternatives are foreclosed in advance, so that forcible delinking entails desocialisation — leading to an absurd non-choice between desocialised inclusion and desocialised exclusion. This threat is manifested in small ways in today's disciplinary practices — from “time-outs” and Internet bans, to firings and benefit sanctions — culminating in the draconian forms of solitary confinement found in supermax prisons. Such regimes are the zero degree of control-by-anxiety: the breakdown of all the coordinates of connectedness in a setting of constant danger, in order to produce a collapse of personality.

The prohibition to speak has been replaced with the command to be communicable. Yet this is simply a sideways repetition of the same basic closure. Surveillance and discrimination, which create segmentations between workers on a micro scale, impede the sharing of knowledge. This has also happened in other fields. For instance, control in prisons now works through a grading of privileges, which lead to psychological control, alongside intensified surveillance and control of space (Barnsley).

This hypothesis of a dominant affect of anxiety overlaps strongly with theories of *precarity*, which are autonomist ways of talking about the same thing. According to autonomist writers, precarity is a type of insecurity which treats people as disposable so as to impose norms and conformity (Lorey; Mitropoulos; Raunig). In precarity, anxiety is a “mode of domination” aimed at forcing workers to submit (Bourdieu, 85). Precarity differs from misery in that the necessities of life are not simply absent. They are available, but withheld conditionally as a way to manipulate people into conformity.

Precarity as a living and working condition produces anxiety and related affects. Studies of precarious workers suggest that they undergo a loss of a sense of distinct time, and of life-work distinctions, due to up-and-down days and hours. It leads to generalised hopelessness (Berardi, 30). Berardi analyses precarity in terms of constant bodily excitation without release (90-1), a view remarkably similar to Reich's earlier theory of anxiety. He also suggests that people are constantly over-excited and over-stimulated, with a shortage of attention resulting from an excess of incoming information and stimulation relative to one's capacity to process it. Berardi refers to a kind of “global panic” arising from multiple anxieties (43).

Again, it is possible to multiply examples. Growing proportions of young people are living at home. Substantial portions of the population — over 10% in the UK — are taking antidepressants. The birthrate in the North and in cities worldwide is declining, as insecurity makes people reluctant to start families. In Japan, millions of young people never leave their homes (the *hikikomori*), while others literally work themselves to death on an epidemic scale. Surveys reveal half the population of the UK are experiencing income insecurity. Economically, aspects of the system of anxiety include “lean” production, financialisation and resultant debt slavery, rapid communication and financial flows, and the globalisation of production. Kolinko's report on service centres reveals: everyone watches themselves, tries to maintain the required “service orientation,” and is constantly subject to re-testing and potential failure both by performance management (such as quantitative requirements on numbers of calls, relative to a computerised distribution system), and a process which denies most

workers a stable job (they have to work six months to even receive a job, as opposed to a learning place). Similar practices are introduced in state institutions through New Public Management. People who remain incorporated are subject to increasingly adverse conditions. Image management means that the gap between the official rules and what really happens is greater than ever. In many cases, people are set up to fail. And then there is the post-911 climate, which channels this widespread anxiety into global politics.

The discussion here is not fully relevant to the global South. The specific condition of the South is that dominant capitalist social forms are layered onto earlier stages of capitalism or pre-capitalist systems, rather than displacing them entirely. Struggles along the axes of misery and boredom are therefore more effective in the South. The South has experienced a particular variety of precarity distinct from earlier periods: the massive “forced delinking” of huge swathes of the world from global capitalism (especially in Africa), and the correspondingly massive growth of the informal sector, which now eclipses the

formal sector almost everywhere. The informal sector provides fertile terrain for autonomous politics, as is clear from cases such as the city of El Alto, (a self-organised city of shanty-towns which is central to social movements in Bolivia), the Zapatista revolt (leading to autonomous indigenous communities in Chiapas), and movements such as *Abahlali baseMjondolo* (an autonomous movement of informal settlement residents in South Africa).

However, it is often subject to a kind of collectivised precarity, as the state might (for instance) bulldoze shanty-towns, dispossess street traders, or crack down on illicit activities — and periodically does so. Revealingly, it was the self-immolation of a street trader subject to this kind of state dispossession which triggered the revolt in Sidi Bouzid, which later expanded into the Arab Spring. Unrest for similar reasons is also becoming increasingly common in China. It is also common for this sector to be dominated by hierarchical gangs or by the networked wings of authoritarian parties (such as the Muslim Brotherhood).

6: ANXIETY IS A PUBLIC SECRET.

EXCESSIVE ANXIETY AND STRESS ARE A PUBLIC secret. They are rarely discussed as systemic effects, particularly in the mainstream. Indeed, they are largely invisible. When discussed at all, they are discussed as individual psychological problems, often blamed on faulty thought patterns or poor adaptation. For instance, the sociologist Elisabeth Katschnig-Fausch studied precarious workers, and found that most such workers were unhappy — but they came up against a social taboo against admitting it. While many people feel a general sense of unease, it is difficult for people to verify its reality. Control systems both formal (performance management and therapy) and informal (media) make it difficult to identify the problem as social rather than personal.

Indeed, the dominant public narrative suggests that we need *more* stress, so as to keep us “safe” (through securitisation) and “competitive” (through performance management).

Each moral panic, each new crackdown or new round of repressive laws, adds to the cumulative weight of anxiety and stress arising from general over-regulation. Real, human insecurity is channelled into fuelling securitisation. This is a vicious circle, because securitisation increases the very conditions (disposability, surveillance, intensive regulation) which cause the initial anxiety. In effect, the security of the Homeland is used as a vicarious substitute for security of the Self. Again, this has precedents: the use of national greatness as vicarious compensation for misery, and the use of global war as a channel for frustration arising from boredom.

Anxiety is also channelled downwards. People lack control over their lives. Often, this leads to an obsessive struggle to reclaim control by micro-managing whatever one *can* control. Parental management techniques, for example, are advertised as ways to reduce parents’ anxiety by providing a definite script they can follow. On

a wider, social level, latent anxieties arising from precarity fuel obsessive projects of social regulation and social control. Arjun Appadurai theorises that such latent anxiety is increasingly projected onto minorities, in a kind of global scapegoating rooted in uncertain economic conditions.

Anxiety is personalised in a number of ways — from New Right discourses blaming the poor for poverty, to contemporary therapies which treat anxiety as a neurological imbalance or a dysfunctional thinking style. A hundred varieties of “management” discourse — time management, anger management, parental management, self-branding, self-monitoring and so on — offer anxious subjects an illusion of control in return for ever-greater conformity to the capitalist model of subjectivity. And many more discourses of scapegoating and criminalisation treat precarity as a matter of personal deviance, irresponsibility, or pathological self-exclusion. Many of these discourses seek to maintain the superstructure of Fordism (nationalism, social integration) without its infrastructure (a national economy, welfare, jobs for all). Doctrines of individual responsibility are central to this backlash, reinforcing vulnerability and disposability. Then there’s the self-esteem industry, the massive outpouring of texts, tapes, and videos telling people how to achieve success through positive thinking — as if the sources of anxiety and frustration are simply illusory. These are indicative of the tendency to *privatise* problems, both those relating to work, and those relating to psychology.

Earlier we argued that people have to be socially isolated in order for a public secret to work. This is true of the current situation, in which *authentic* communication is increasingly rare. Communication is more pervasive than ever (the common idea of “immaterial labour”; the

requirement to communicate; the rise of social media), but increasingly, communication happens *only* through paths mediated by the system. Hence, in many ways, people are *prevented* from actually communicating, even while the system demands that everyone be connected and communicable. People both conform to the demand to communicate rather than expressing themselves, and self-censor within mediated spaces. Similarly, affective labour does not alleviate anxiety; it compounds workers’ suffering while simply distracting consumers (researchers have found that requirements on workers to feign happiness actually cause serious health problems).

Hakim Bey famously argues that by coming together as a group which is *not* family, work-mates, or a consumption group, we already realise the immediatist project. Some radicals still have such connections. But how many people do? And how many people even have immediate connections to their family or work-mates, without performance management or parental management systems coming between them? Routines of work, consumption, and social reproduction increasingly eat up all of the available time and energy.

If there is a public secret, then the volume of communication is irrelevant. The connection of active affects will not happen unless there are channels through which the secret itself can be spoken. In this sense, people are fundamentally *more alone than ever*. It is difficult for most people (including many radicals) to acknowledge the *reality* of what they experience and feel. Something has to be counted (in quality systems) or mediated (broadcast on TV or the Internet), or among activists, it must be Political, to be validated as real. The public secret does not meet these criteria, and so it remains invisible.

7: CURRENT TACTICS AND THEORIES AREN'T WORKING. WE NEED NEW TACTICS AND THEORIES TO COMBAT ANXIETY.

WE SUGGESTED EARLIER THAT THE SYSTEM has become better at killing the buzz of resistance. We might here focus on two related developments: pre-emption, and punishment by process. Pre-emptive tactics

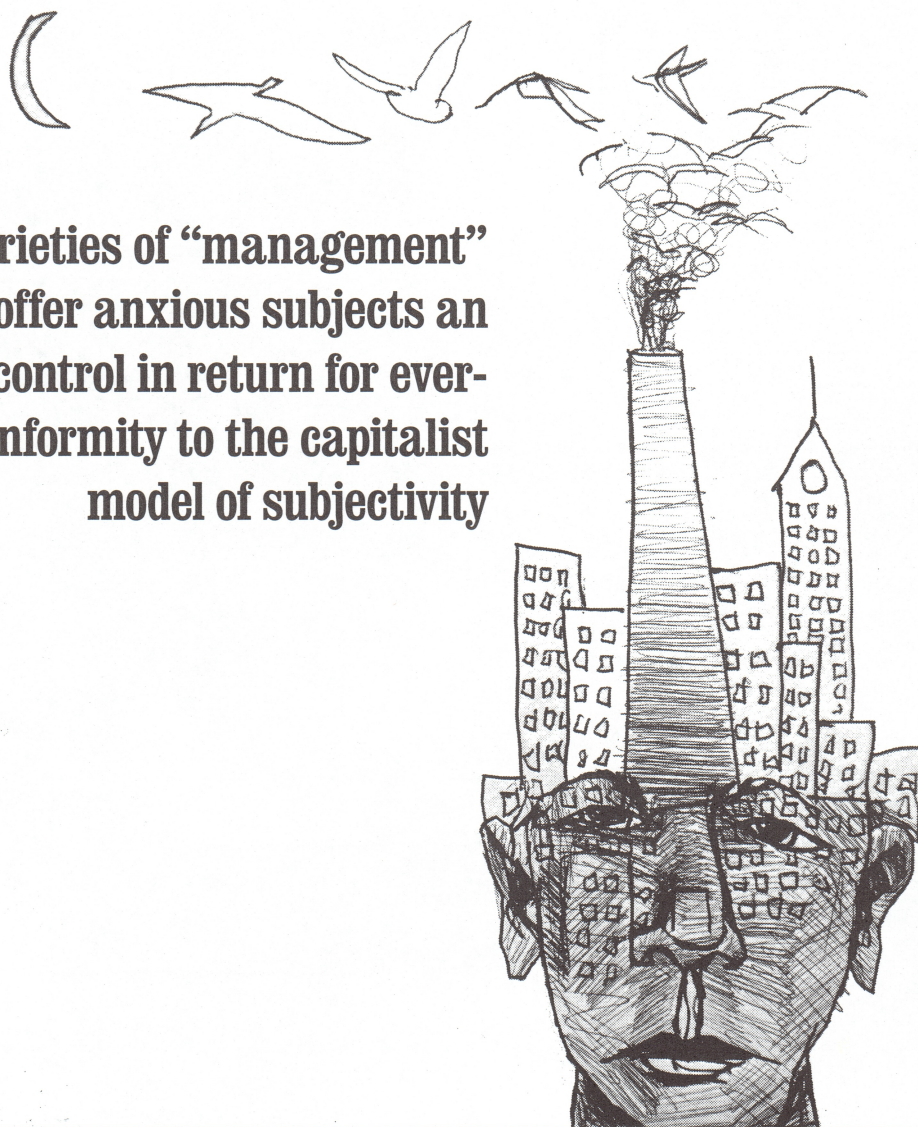
are those which stop protests before they start, or before they can achieve anything. Kettling, mass arrests, stop-and-search, free speech zones, lockdowns, and pre-emptive arrests are examples of these kinds of tactics. Punishment by process



entails keeping people in a situation of fear, pain, or vulnerability through the abuse of procedures designed for other purposes — such as keeping people on pre-charge or pre-trial bail conditions which disrupt their everyday activity, using no-fly and border-stop lists to harass known dissidents, carrying out violent dawn raids, needlessly putting people's photographs in the press, arresting people on suspicion (sometimes in accord with quotas), using pain-compliance holds, or quietly making known that someone is under surveillance. Once fear of state interference is instilled, it is reinforced by the web of cameras, barriers, police guards, and threatening notices that are gridded across public space, and which act as strategically placed triggers of trauma and/or anxiety.

Anecdotal evidence has provided many horror stories about the effects of such tactics — people left a nervous wreck after years awaiting a trial on charges for which they were acquitted, committing suicide after months out of touch with their friends and family, or afraid to go out after incidents of abuse. The effects are just as real as if the state was killing or disappearing people, but they are rendered largely invisible. While established militants often keep fighting, people going on their first protest or action are more likely to succumb. These types of state tactics are part of the general regime of anxiety-production as a form of social control. In addition, many radicals are also on the receiving end of precarious employment and/or benefit regimens. We are failing to escape the generalised production of anxiety.

**a hundred varieties of “management”
discourse offer anxious subjects an
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model of subjectivity**



If the first wave provided a machine for fighting misery, and the second wave a machine for fighting boredom, what we now need is a machine for fighting anxiety — and this is something we do not yet have. If we see from within anxiety, we haven't yet performed the "reversal of perspective" as the Situationists call it — seeing from the standpoint of desire instead of power. This report hypothesises that today's main forms of resistance arise from the struggle against boredom, and have stopped working so well because anxiety has replaced boredom as the dominant reactive affect. To take an extreme case, one Situationist tactic entailed rearranging furniture in one's home, so as to denaturalise arrangements and make them visible (Vienne). As a tactic against boredom, this is brilliant — it makes a habitual space unusual and exciting again. But in a context of anxiety, it simply adds extra stress and intensifies the problem, making it harder to do things quickly.

On the whole, current militant resistance does not and cannot combat anxiety. It often involves deliberate exposure to high-anxiety situations, which are used as a basis for group-formation. The absence of established scripts makes it hard to avoid uncertainty. So increasingly, transmission belts from the mainstream into resistance are closed-off. People cling to the illusory certainties of authority and conformity. Most people are subject to forms of separation which impede the sharing of experiences. Radical activists are one step ahead here, since we already have affinity groups and discussion spaces, and we're already aware of the constructedness of forms of control. Many people are captured by means of personalised pseudo-solutions which offer the allure of a slightly improved life as an aspirational goal. Many who have grown up

under neoliberalism are unaware that surveillance, performance management, and so on are anything but normal and natural.

Insurrectionists overcome anxiety by turning negative affects into anger, and acting on this anger through a projectile affect of attack. In many ways, this provides an alternative to anxiety. However, it is difficult for people to pass from anxiety to anger, and it is easy for people to be pushed back the other way, due to trauma. We've noticed a certain tendency for insurrectionists to refuse to take seriously the existence of psychological barriers to militant action. Their response tends to be, "just do it!" But anxiety is a real, material force — not simply a spook. To be sure, its sources are often rooted in spooks, but the question of overcoming the grip of a spook is rarely as simple as consciously rejecting it. There's a whole series of bioenergetic blockages underlying the spook's illusory power, which is ultimately an effect of reactive affect. Saying "just do it" is like saying to someone with a broken leg, "just walk!" If we can't get from the point where people are paralysed by anxiety to the point where they can "just do it," this strategy is doomed.

The situation *feels* hopeless and inescapable, but it isn't. It feels this way because of effects of precarity — constant over-stress, the contraction of time into the present, the vulnerability of each separated (or systemically mediated) individual, the system's dominance of all aspects of social space. Structurally, the system is vulnerable. The reliance on anxiety is a desperate measure, used in the absence of stronger forms of conformity. The system's attempt to keep running by keeping people feeling powerless leaves it open to sudden ruptures, such as outbreaks of revolt. So how do we get to the point where we stop feeling powerless?

8. A NEW STYLE OF PRECARIETY-FOCUSED CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING IS NEEDED

IN ORDER TO FORMULATE NEW RESPONSES to anxiety, we need to return to the drawing board. We need to construct a new set of knowledges and theories from the bottom up. To this end, we need to develop approaches based on consciousness raising,

militant investigation, critical pedagogy, or some combination along these lines. We need dialogical practices which produce dense intersections between experiences of the current situation and theories of transformation. We need to start such processes with the excluded

and oppressed — but there is no reason we shouldn't start with ourselves.

For building this kind of perspective on the present, we need something other than the currently standard workshop/skill-share model of education. This method is effective in combating boredom, and it is often ideal for transferring simple skills or knowledge. It also effectively avoids the boring, learning-inhibiting aspects of institutional education. However, it is not the best way to arrive at grounded knowledge

current militant resistance does not and cannot combat anxiety. It often involves deliberate exposure to high-anxiety situations, which are used as a basis for group-formation

of a new situation. In workshops, the focus is often on an external issue already established as important, and facilitators often act as temporary *knowing subjects*. The event is usually one-off, focused on quickly conveying something — rather than on relations among participants.

In exploring the possibilities for such a practice, the Institute has looked into previous cases of similar practices. From an examination of accounts of feminist consciousness raising in the 1960s/70s, we have summarised the following central features:

1. Producing new grounded theory relating to experience. We need to reconnect with our experiences *today* — rather than theories from past phases. The idea here is that our own perceptions of our situation are blocked or cramped by dominant assumptions, and need to be made explicit. The focus should be on those experiences which relate to the public secret. These experiences need to be recounted and pooled — firstly within groups, and then publicly, in alternative accounts.

2. Recognising the reality, and the systemic nature, of our experiences. The validation of the reality of experiences is an important part of

this. We need to affirm that our pain is really pain, that what we see and feel is real, and that our problems are not only — or merely — personal. Sometimes this entails bringing up experiences we have discounted or repressed. Sometimes it entails challenging the personalisation of problems.

3. Transformation of emotions. People are paralysed by unnameable emotions, and a general sense of feeling like shit. These emotions need to be transformed into a sense of injustice, a type of anger which is less resentful and more focused, a move towards self-expression, and a reactivation of resistance. The transformation of latent discontent into a focused perspective is largely an emotional process, relying on the “click” (see below).

4. Creating or expressing voice. The culture of silence surrounding the public secret needs to be overthrown. Existing assumptions need to be denaturalised and challenged, and “cops in the head” expelled. The exercise of voice moves the reference of truth and reality from the system to the speaker, contributing to the reversal of perspective — seeing the world through *one's own perspective and desires*, rather than the system's. The weaving together of different experiences and stories is an important way of reclaiming voice. The process is an articulation as well as an expression.

5. Constructing a disalienated space. Social separation is reduced by the existence of such a space. The space provides critical distance on one's life, and a kind of emotional safety net to attempt transformations, dissolving fears. This should not simply be a self-help measure, used to sustain existing activities, but instead, a space for reconstructing a radical perspective.

6. Analysing and theorising structural sources based on similarities in experience. The point is not simply to recount experiences but to transform and restructure them through their theorisation. Participants change the dominant meaning of their experience by mapping it with different assumptions. This is often done by finding patterns in experiences which are related to liberatory theory, and seeing personal problems and small injustices as symptoms of wider structural problems. It leads to a new perspective, a vocabulary of motives, an anti-anti-political horizon.

IN THIS WAY, WE CAN PRODUCE NEW GROUNDED theory without relying on a vanguard intellectual to perform the integration and abstraction for us. Among radicals, this approach will help to re-situate our practices in the current conjuncture. Among a wider community, the goal is to produce the *click* — the moment at which the structural source of problems suddenly *makes sense* in relation to experiences. This click is what focuses and transforms anger (arguably from reactive to active). Greater understanding may in turn relieve psychological pressures, and make it easier to respond with anger instead of depression or anxiety. It might even be possible to encourage people into such groups by promoting them as a form of self-help — even though they reject the adjustment orientation of therapeutic and self-esteem building processes.

The result is a kind of affinity group, but oriented to perspective and analysis, rather than action; it should be widely recognised, however, that this new awareness needs to turn into some kind of action, otherwise it is just frustratingly introspective. Such a strategy will help our practice in a number of ways. Firstly, these groups can provide a pool of potential accomplices. Secondly, they can prime people for future moments of revolt. Thirdly, they create the potential to shift the general field of so-called public opinion in ways which create an easier context for action. Groups would also function as a life-support system and as a space to step back from immersion in the present. They would provide a kind of fluency in radical and dissident conceptions which most people lack today.

Another theory about anxiety, stemming from psychoanalysis (Freud and Lacan), suggests that people become anxious when they lack the Symbolic or the Superego. In its original form, this theory is conservative and authoritarian, suggesting that people become anxious when they don't have a boss. This makes little sense today, because authoritarianism has been strengthened, along with precarity. Nevertheless, there is a glimmer of truth to it. Anxiety is reinforced by the fact that it is never clear what "the market" *wants* from us, that the demand for conformity is connected to a vague set of criteria which cannot be established in advance. Even the most conformist people are disposable nowadays, as old economic niches are destroyed or

new technologies introduced. The system seems to lack any reference outside itself — it has turned into a tautology, producing for the sake of production, reproducing itself for the sake of its own resistance, with less and less reference to needs, use-values, or desires external to it. A generalized lack of understanding of our situation increases anxiety. One of the functions of small-group discussions and consciousness raising is to construct a perspective from which one can interpret the situation. In a sense, this is a way of providing a non-hierarchical Symbolic, similar to indigenous knowledge and gift-economy.

The process is not foregone, however. One major problem is maintaining regular time commitments in a context of constant time and attentive pressure. Even the decision to take time for such a group would now effectively require a self-subtraction from high-speed flows. The process has a slower pace and a more human scale than is culturally acceptable today. However, the fact that groups offer a respite from daily struggle, and perhaps a quieter style of interacting and listening which relieves attentive pressure, may also be attractive. Participants would need to learn to speak with a self-expressive voice (rather than a neoliberal performance derived from the compulsion to merely share banal information), and to listen and analyse.

Another problem is the complexity of experiences. The structural derivation of personal experiences from structural conditions may be more mediated today than in the past, due to the nuanced discriminations built into the semio-capitalist code. This makes the analytical part of the process particularly important.

Overall, the process should establish new propositions about the sources of anxiety. These propositions can form a basis for new forms of struggle, and the revival of active force from its current repression. It is possible that the new machine for fighting anxiety will involve new tactics — or it may simply involve ways to make existing tactics work more effectively. Either way, the goal is to break out of the impasse in which we are stuck. (A)

See page 71 for references.

WHAT WORK MEANS

BY BOB BLACK • AB0B0B51@VERIZON.NET

AND WHY IT MATTERS

IN THE BEGINNING OF DAVID H'S "WHAT Do We Mean by Work?"¹ he writes: "In the beginning of Bob Black's 'The Abolition of Work,' he calls work an ideology. This use of the word ideology in relation to work is one that has never been previously used. This semantic misuse by traditional standards is a reflection of what is to come." Later, H will fake quotations. Here, he fakes a paraphrase. Toward — not right at — the beginning of my essay (in its fourth paragraph), I say that "all the old ideologies are conservative because they believe in work. Some of them, like Marxism and most brands of anarchism, believe in work all the more fiercely because they believe in so little else" (17).² David H's falsification "is a reflection of what is to come."

This does not say that work is an ideology. It says that *belief* in work is *part* of several ideologies — including, as David H soon makes all too clear, his own: anarcho-leftism. A text whose thesis is my "semantic misuse" should not, "in the beginning," or anywhere, falsify meanings. As is obvious throughout my essay, for me work is an activity, indeed an institution, not an ideology. The noun "work" goes with the verb "work." "No one should ever work," my *real* beginning (17) is nonsense otherwise. But even if my ideas are nonsense, they aren't semantic nonsense.

Someone like H, who doesn't understand the difference between "its" and "it's" — *it's* taught in grade school, or *it* used to be — and who is largely unfamiliar with the use of commas, shouldn't criticize anybody's use of language.³ Also, "independent" does not mean "different," as H supposes: "Work however in the myriad of ways the term is used" — come on, not *that* many ways — "is in many of its





usages [redundant] independent of the way Black defines it." Later, he says, "Use values are things we make because we need to use them..." — the same redundant tautology. It is not the case that "farm work is use value work," because "use value" is not an adjective and it does not mean "useful" — by the way, is tobacco farming "use value work"? And who is the "socialist's Marx"? Is there yet another Marx Brother? The *anarchist's* Marx — would that be Groucho or Harpo?⁴ Here I can't even guess at what H is trying to say. And that's why some of these points, regarded one by one, might seem to be quibbles, but the cumulative impact of these blunders is not only wearisome, it either obscures meaning or invites the suspicion that there is none to obscure.

Actually, H himself repeats, without disapproval, my real definition of work (the short version): "forced labor that is compulsory," except that my version isn't redundant: I refer to "*forced labor*, that is, compulsory production" (18). Thus he contradicts his initial accusation. If this "minimal definition" (as I call it) — dare I say, my working definition? — does not agree substantially with commonsense or dictionary definitions of work, H never says so, or if so, why it does not. After all, H agrees with it. It is

easy to find definitions of work which resemble mine.⁵ I complete the definition by saying that "Work is never done for its own sake, it's done on account of some product or output that the worker (or, more often, somebody else) gets out of it" (18-19). The "more often" comment acknowledges my awareness of such work-systems as slavery and wage-labor.

Work, then, can mean what I say it means. But it can also mean, says H, "*fulfilling work*." Now, as a definition of work, or one of them, this will not do. It's like saying that a definition of "dog" is inadequate if it does not include "brown dog" — in the definition. A definition isn't usually a catalog of all the attributes the *definiendum* may have. There are brown dogs, big dogs, rabid dogs, running dogs, etc., but these adjectival facts about certain dogs have no place in the definition of dog.

All my careful efforts to define and distinguish work and play are lost on David H. I sharply repudiated those who, like Johan Huizinga and Bernie de Koven, *define* "play" as inconsequential, as inherently unproductive, by the same sort of "semantic misuse" I fault in H: "The point is not that play is [necessarily] without consequences. This is to demean play. The point is that the consequences, if any, are gratuitous"⁶

(20). I made clear that while work and play are not the same thing, it's possible for them to have something in common, and it is what they *can* have in common that could form the, for lack of a better word, "economic" basis of a ludic way of life⁷ (28-31). In this respect I am not too far from Peter Kropotkin and Emma Goldman, and I am closer still to Charles Fourier and William Morris. But I am very far from today's organizationalist, workerist anarchists.

In a rather exasperated reply to a libertarian conservative critic — who is, I am sorry to say, to this day my most intelligent critic — I wrote: "My proposal is to combine the best part (in fact, the only good part) of work — the production of use-values — with the best of play, which I take to be every aspect of play, its freedom and its fun, its voluntariness and its intrinsic gratification... Is this so hard to understand? *If productive play is possible, so too is the abolition of work.*"⁸ Well, David H? Is it so hard to understand?

David H is therefore trivial, and irrelevant, in saying that some people like their work. I acknowledged this phenomenon. Even a job, I said, can have "intrinsic interest" (19). H probably overestimates the number of such people. How many people who say this, would do the same work without pay? Here I agree with Nietzsche: "Looking for work in order to be paid: in civilized countries today almost all men are as one in doing that. For all of them work is a means and not an end in itself... But there are, if only rarely, men who would rather perish than work without any *pleasure* in their work."⁹

Some people like to *think* they like their work, into which they put so much of themselves, because, if they didn't think so, their self-esteem would suffer. They don't want to think that they're being played for suckers (and I never said that they were: I pass judgment on no individuals). People try to make the best of things, and to rationalize the inevitable. David H, in 2013, understands work almost as well as Friedrich Nietzsche understood it in 1882, but not nearly as well as I understood it in 1980.

Since H has reminded me of the Marxist concept "alienation," let me in turn remind him of the Marxist concept "false consciousness." In general, it's H, not I, whose grasp of Marxist economics is weak. Thus there is no such thing as "Marx's distinction between a use value and a commodity." Marx's distinction is

between use-value and exchange-value. Many commodities have use-value. That makes them more saleable. Use-values are not "things that we make" because use-values are not things. To say so is, as Marx would say, "reification."

H must have no idea what my thesis is, since he never mentions it. H has just not thought through what it would take to separate and consolidate what can be fulfilling in work from what cannot. One of us has given some thought to the matter, and it isn't him. Isn't this a place where the class struggle anarchists might lend a hand, instead of running around pestering workers and organizing each other? They champion the

some people like to *think* they like their work, into which they put so much of themselves, because, if they didn't think so, their self-esteem would suffer. They don't want to think that they're being played for suckers

worker, but they don't know much about what makes a worker a worker: work.

H implies that he is that kind of anarchist — "a Salt" — who takes a job in order to "organize it." This still happens? Another shot in the foot (the left foot) from language... H doesn't want to organize the *job* — the boss has already done that! — he wants to organize the workers in the workplace. I would like to see some success stories from Salts (taken with a grain of salt?). Do they call themselves Salts because they think they are the Salt of the Earth? Anyone who can afford to take a job which he can expect to be fired from, should not be speculating about whether I am "privileged," as H reports "some people" do. In this way, H interjects false, irrelevant and derogatory gossip about me while disclaiming responsibility for it.

"Curiously," H says, "it isn't evident that Black has read Marx enough to know that Marx already has a term for this. Marx's term is alienation which is his word for when we are abstracted from the products we create, or even more generally it

means how we are disconnected from our work through the wage system." I know something of Marx on alienation, thank you so much, to the extent that he is comprehensible. What he discussed, infrequently, is mostly not what I discuss: not out of ignorance, but by choice. There is more about work *as such* in "The Abolition of Work" than there is in all three volumes of *Theories of Surplus Value*. But then Marx never held down a job for the last 35 years of his life. *He* was never a Salt.¹⁰

I see no reason for anarchists to respect Marxism at all. Marxists have mocked us, defamed us, betrayed us and slaughtered us, but they have never respected us

Marxists, including anarcho-Marxists like H, regard work *under capitalism* as an institution of exploitation. But they neglect what I highlight: work as an institution of domination, and not only under capitalism. I have often heard workers complain about work. I have never heard workers complain about alienation. Work was repressive for several thousand years of civilization before capitalism. What worries me is that, administered by Marxists or syndicalists, work will still be repressive *after* capitalism. "In all previous revolutions the mode of activity always remained unchanged and it was only a question of a different distribution of this activity, a new distribution of labour to other persons, whilst the communist revolution is directed against the hitherto existing *mode* of activity, does away with *labour*, and abolishes the rule of all classes with the classes themselves...."¹¹ This is Karl Marx. If H doesn't believe me, maybe he will believe Karl Marx.

I see no reason to pour the critique of work into Marxist molds. Much would spill over. In fact, I see no reason for anarchists to respect Marxism at all. Marxists have mocked us, defamed us, betrayed us and slaughtered us, but they have never respected us. Marxism is anti-anarchist,

through and through. Anarchism should be anti-Marxist, through and through.¹² Not only out of principle, but out of expediency: "The anarchists *are* at a turning point. For the first time in history, they are the *only* revolutionary current. To be sure, not all anarchists are revolutionaries, but it is no longer possible to be a revolutionary without being an anarchist, in fact if not in name."¹³

Lecturing on, H informs us that "some people [who *are* these people? is H one of them?] say that Black lets capitalism 'off the hook' because he ignores the specific exploitative nature of capitalism. By saying just work and not distinguishing work that is capitalist wage work, which is the majority of the work done in a capitalist society and less forced 'activists' [huh?] that we also call work." This is either a sentence fragment or a sentence which, toward the end, dissolves into gibberish. What are "forced 'activists'"?

Black, by this reasoning, also lets dogs off the hook (or off the leash?) because he leaves out the specifically "brown" nature of brown dogs, the specifically "big" nature of big dogs, and the specifically "rabid" nature of rabid dogs. By H's reasoning, one can't say anything serious about work, only about wage-labor, which is only one of the forms work assumes, even in late capitalism, as even H eventually gets around to admitting. Marxists and other workerists can talk about brown dogs — about exploitation, wage-labor, surplus value, the falling rate of profit, etc. — all they want to. I might agree with some of it. But there's an undistributed remainder. It is work itself.

In 1985 I chose to write about dogs (as in "working like a dog") — not brown dogs — partly because almost nobody else was.¹⁴ To some extent, I've changed that. H's own criticism is evidence of that.¹⁵ I think the zero-work idea was in the air in the mid-1980's. It must have been, because Andre Gorz, who never had an original idea in his life, wrote a book espousing a watered-down version of the abolition of work which was published in English in the same year (1985) that my essay was first published.¹⁶ In 1995, perennial trend-surfer Jeremy Rifkin published a stupid book, *The End of Work*, which I savaged.¹⁷ And now — this proves that I've really *arrived* — there's a book by a Marxist-feminist college professor which has "antiwork" and "postwork" in its subtitle!¹⁸

Among those in the post-left anarchist tendencies, the critique of work is widely acknowledged, even taken for granted, for the very good reason “that this monster called WORK remains the precise & exact target of our rebellious wrath, the one single most oppressive *reality* we face (& we must learn also to recognize Work when it’s disguised as ‘leisure’).”¹⁹

On this point, one of H’s misquotations of me is a little more serious than most of his fuck-ups: “Black says that many leftist [leftists?] and anarchists are so obsessed with work they ‘talk about little else.’” Ironically, H is trying, for once, to be nice and agree with me here. But what I *really* said, and which I have already quoted, is that “all the old ideologies are conservative because they believe in work. Some of them, like Marxism and most brands of anarchism, believe in work all the more fiercely because they believe in so little else” (17). I didn’t say that leftists and most anarchists *talk about little else* than work, I said that they *believe in* work all the more fiercely because they *believe in* so little else. Leftists, including left anarchists, were, with rare exceptions, *not* talking about work in the 1980s. It wasn’t a conspiracy of silence, but it might as well have been. Leftists were thinking about workers (in the abstract) without thinking about work, and certainly without talking about work. But work needed to be thought about, and talked about, critically. So I thought about work and talked about work, critically.

As is more apparent from my essay than from H’s, work assumes various forms. There is wage-labor, but there is also chattel slavery, serfdom, peonage, housework, and self-employment. The last two are still very important in “capitalist society.” I’d say that capitalist society couldn’t do without them, even if “most work” is wage-labor. But you can’t organize *those* workers! H even says so! This is, for left anarchists, a source of sadness. Indeed, it condemns them to futility. As so often, H (his fourth paragraph) takes back his previous criticism (that “alienation” jazz) and agrees with me.

A critique of work is necessarily a critique of capitalism, but a critique of capitalism is not necessarily a critique of work. That is why the critique of work is more radical. A critique of work is more of a critique of domination than of exploitation. A critique of wage-labor is more of a critique of exploitation than of domination.

If all you object to is exploitation, it might seem that workers’ liberation is complete in a workers’ state where state ownership has supplanted private ownership of the means of production, and wages are equalized. Nobody is exploited, and everybody is dominated. No anarchist ever believed in this. H isn’t sure, but he has this bad feeling that I might have objections to workplace democracy. And I do. Since I reject work, I necessarily reject workplace democracy. But I also reject democracy itself in every way, shape and form — full stop.

a critique of work is necessarily a critique of capitalism, but a critique of capitalism is not necessarily a critique of work. That is why the critique of work is more radical

I reject self-managed servitude. That was only an incidental consideration in “The Abolition of Work,” although it is in there. But the critique of democracy is increasingly salient in much that I have written since 1985. I summarize it in “Debunking Democracy.”²⁰

I’m sorry (well, not really) to draw attention to another David H fabrication. He quotes me thusly: “He also makes the separate and more damning claim that in a work place run by the workers the ‘people become the tyrant and what the fuck is the point.’” This supposed quotation does not appear in “The Abolition of Work” or in anything else I have ever written. Anybody moderately acquainted with what I write, and how I write, knows that I would never say this. I was never a snotty little (“what the fuck is the point”) art school punk.

H has trouble with quotation. He commenced with a fake paraphrase. Later he invented fake quotations. But even when he honestly tries to quote me, he fails every time. *Every quotation H attributes to me is inaccurate.* He can’t even copy words accurately.

Contrary to H, his “fulfilling work” is *not* what I *mean* by play. Most play is now indeed inconsequential: it’s unproductive in an economic

sense, and, I hope, most play always will be. All or some of what H calls fulfilling work, might be transformable into free activity *in a free society*. I might have been at fault for contributing to H's confusion when I wrote: "Such is work. Play is just the opposite." Believe it or not, I haven't noticed this inconsistency in 28 years. Apparently nobody has, including H. As I define work, work is indeed "just the opposite" of play but only insofar as the one is voluntary and the

every proposal that's worthwhile, starts out being considered crazy or scandalous

other is not. The rest of the essay is clear on this crucial point. What I really meant, as is apparent from my next sentence, was to identify *one respect* in which work and play are opposites: "Play is always voluntary. What might otherwise be play is work if it's forced" (20).

In 1885, William Morris, who was a British Marxist and communist, wrote: "As long as the work is repulsive it will still be a burden which must be taken up daily, and even so would mar our life, even though the hours of labour are short. What we want to do is to add to our wealth without diminishing our pleasures. Nature will not be finally conquered till our work becomes part of the pleasure of our lives."²¹ That is *exactly* the thesis of "The Abolition of Work," although I did not, and would not, speak of the conquest of Nature, which sounds more like Francis Bacon than the way Morris usually sounded. The only difference is that Morris would continue to call "work" what I would prefer to call, to avoid confusion and to emphasize the difference, something else. Morris in his essay (like mine, originally a speech) made quite clear what he meant by "useful work" — just as I was quite clear in contrasting work, with or without traces of fulfillment, with productive play.

Morris and I — and, before us, Charles Fourier, and others — discussed, and tried to identify, principles for the social transformation of what is now work, or rather some of it, into free

productive play.²² Another way to put it, which may appeal to certain tastes, is that we all aspire to the realization and suppression of work. David H doesn't discuss this most important dimension of my argument, probably because he doesn't understand it.

H's proposal to call fulfilling work "work," and to call unfulfilling work "Work," serves no purpose. It will be universally ignored. It's not that we are, in H's words, "lacking in terminology." We have too much terminology! We have lots of words. It's just that some people don't know "how to do things with words."²³ H is one of these people. We have so many words that William Morris and I can say the same thing in different words. H has trouble saying what he has to say in any words. Words are a snare for H. They're a source of splendor for me.

At some remote future time, an anarcho-leftist — supposing, as I doubt, that there will be anarcho-leftists at some remote future time — might produce an intellectually respectable critique of my critique of work. The left has had 28 years to try. Naturally, in my vanity I like to think that the reason is that my argument is unanswerable.

There might be other explanations. Anarcho-leftists own all the anarchist bookstores and these all ban my books. They were, until recently (I refer to AK Press and PM Press), the only ostensibly anarchist distributors, although you might not suspect that they were anarchist if you look at the stuff in their catalogs.²⁴ Leftists also operate most of the anarchist websites. The leftist leaders know what I am capable of in the way of polemics. They know how I dealt with Murray Bookchin, among others. To respond to me, as they know, only affords me opportunities in reply to make fools of them even as I publicize my own ideas, which they don't want to get around. So they try to ignore me, which complements their censorship of my writings. But, as I observed a few years ago,

What I think I did do was define work as a basic anarchist issue. I forced even the pro-work anarchists like anarcho-syndicalists and Platformists to defend work instead of just taking it for granted. They ridicule the zero-work idea instead of trying to refute it, so, the idea goes unrefuted. Naturally that means that more people will agree with it.²⁵

I may have exaggerated the extent to which, by 2005, I'd forced the leftists into defending work, but, David H is an example of how my challenge to the left can no longer be ignored.

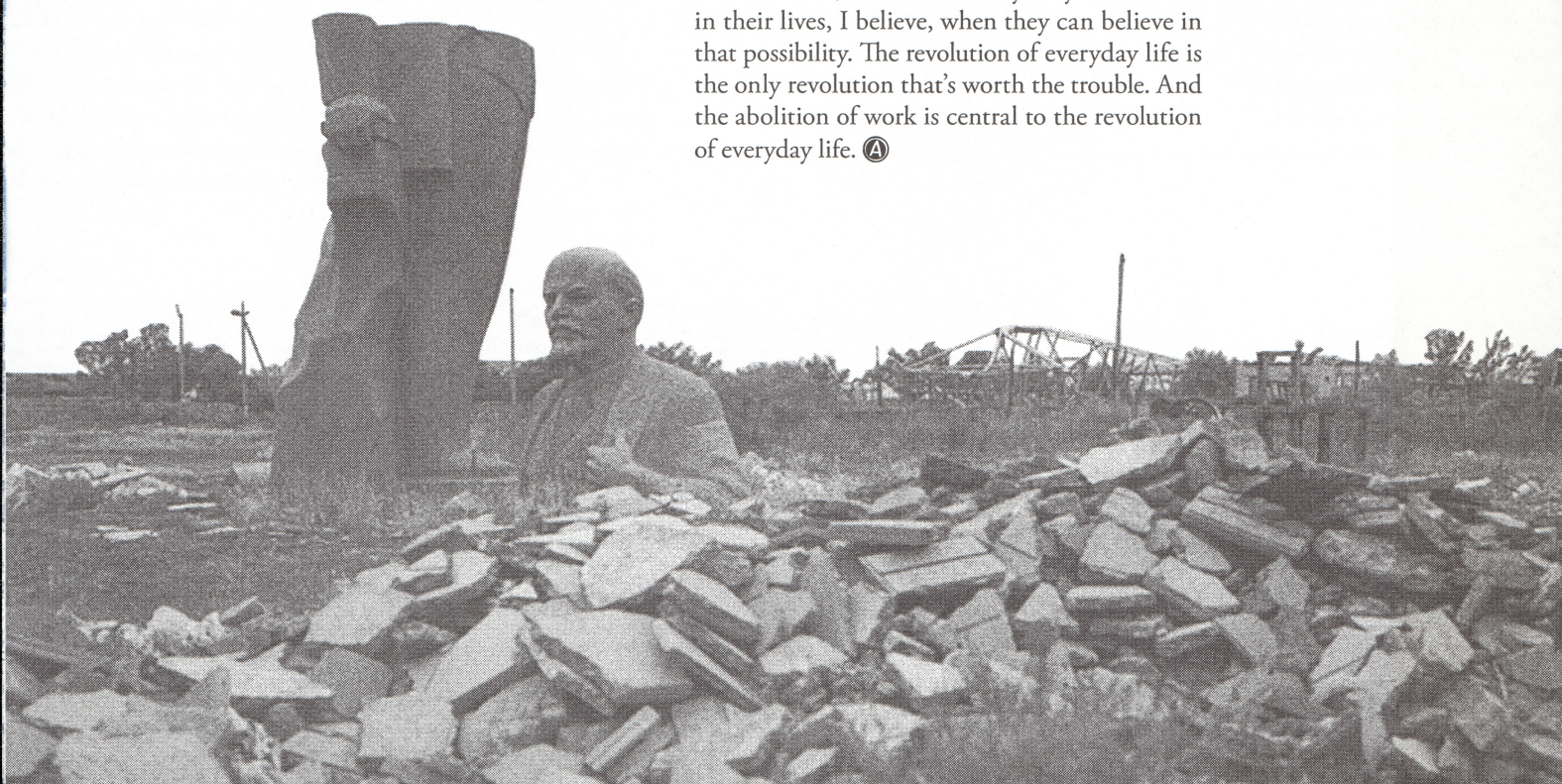
Although the critique of the left was not a main theme in "The Abolition of Work," it openly appears there, and it's a critique of the left so far as work is concerned. Other aspects of my critique of the left appear in other, previously published texts which are also in *The Abolition of Work and Other Essays* or in later books. With the collapse of European Marxism some years later, to universal rejoicing, the question arose as to where this left the left. Capitalist and democratic triumphalists proclaimed — as we now know, prematurely — the end of history. This was a chastening time for leftists — not only the utterly discredited Marxist-Leninists — because they had all, even if they were anti-Marxist (as most anarchists then were), assumed that history was on their side. History doesn't take sides.

All leftists, it turned out, were more Marxist than they thought they were. That's why left anarchists like David H cling to scraps of Marxist doctrine (as does, among others, Noam Chomsky) which were never entirely plausible even within the whole Marxist ideological apparatus, and which mean nothing outside of it. The Marxist economics which anarcho-leftists still dabble in has been discredited in theory and in practice. But they have nothing to replace it

with. I don't think there has ever been an anarchist economist, unless you count Proudhon, and he is now even more irrelevant than Marx, when it comes to economics.

Leftists, although they have lost all theoretical bases for doing so, still stand firmly on the ground of *the economy* (the "base," as the Marxists used to say). And base it is. The left shares with the ideologues of capitalism the myth of productivism.²⁶ What I call the abolition of work, what Charles Fourier called attractive labor, what William Morris called useful work vs. useless toil, amounts to a call for *the abolition of the economy*. Leftist anarchists who laugh at that, might ponder that what they supposedly call for, the abolition of the state, would get just as many laughs. Although the economy is even less popular than the state. Work is not popular at all. Every proposal that's worthwhile starts out being considered crazy or scandalous.

The abolition of work, the abolition of the state, the abolition of the economy, and even the abolition of art: these abolitions all arrive at the same place. They don't all mean the same thing, but they designate the same social condition. In that condition, there is no place for institutions of coercion, such as work and the state. In that place, there is no place for workers. Instead, there's a place (every place) for playful creators and producers and their friends, and even a place for the lazy. In that place, art, for instance, isn't a specialized activity. It could be part of the life of anybody who wants it there, and almost everybody will want it in their lives, I believe, when they can believe in that possibility. The revolution of everyday life is the only revolution that's worth the trouble. And the abolition of work is central to the revolution of everyday life. ㊦



Notes

- 1 Available online at <http://libcom.org/library/>.
- 2 There have been, starting in 1985, many published editions of the essay, translated into many languages — even Esperanto! Here I will cite, in parentheses, the page numbers in *The Abolition of Work and Other Essays* (Port Townsend, WA: Loompanics Unlimited, n.d. [1986]).
- 3 Speaking of punctuation: H notes my ironic use of “scare quotes” around the word “communist.” I have long since concurred in Adorno’s condemnation of quotation marks used as ironic devices. I quote Adorno at length (without irony, and without quotation marks) on this point in *Anarchy after Leftism* (Columbia, MO: C.A.L. Press, 1997), 38: Theodor W. Adorno, “Punctuation Marks,” *The Antioch Review* (Summer 1990): 300-305, at 303. Left anarchists are among the worst offenders (thus I am usually an “anarchist,” not an anarchist, etc.).
- 4 I have implied as much. Black, “Theses on Groucho Marxism,” *The Abolition of Work and Other Essays*, 41-43; Bob Black, “In Defense of Marxism,” *Friendly Fire* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 1992), 69.
- 5 E.g., Ralf Dahrendorf, *On Britain* (London: British Broadcasting Corp., 1982), 183; John White, *Education and the End of Work: A New Philosophy of Work and Learning* (London & Herndon, VA: Cassell, 1997), 10.
- 6 This tenet of Huizinga’s is inconsistent with what his book is mostly about: the identification of a “play element” in, among other activities, law, war, poetry, philosophy, art, and even business. J. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1955). I don’t know about DeKoven — I got his phrase (play as the “suspension of consequences”) from the late Gary Warne, whom I harshly criticized in “The Exquisite Corpse,” *Abolition of Work*, 139. It was at Warne’s Gorilla Grotto, “an adult play environment,” that I gave my original speech on the abolition of work. The only thing I’ve since learned about DeKoven is that he is a major figure in the New Games movement which designs noncompetitive games (everybody wins). My position is that there is more to play than playing games. The quoted expression may come from Bernie DeKoven, *The Well-Played Game: A Player’s Path to Wholeness* (3rd ed.; San Jose, CA: Writers Press Club, 2002) (originally published in 1978), to which I have no access.
- 7 The Latin word, *ludi*, refers to games. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, 174. But the dictionary definitions of play are much more encompassing. *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 2: 2244-45.
- 8 Black, “Smokestack Lightning,” in *Friendly Fire*, 48 (emphasis in the original). For another restatement of the basic idea: “No Future for the Workplace,” *ibid.*, 16. The latter text was first published in a daily newspaper, the *Baltimore Sun* — the paper H.L. Mencken was involved with for most of his professional life. I like that.
- 9 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, tr. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 108 (§ 42). Nietzsche also discusses how nearly all European men have to accept an occupational role, a job: “The result is rather strange. As they attain a more advanced age, almost all Europeans confound themselves with their role; . . . they themselves have forgotten how much accident, moods, caprice disposed of them when the question of their ‘vocation’ was decided — and how many other roles they might perhaps have been *able* to play; for now it is too late.” *Ibid.*, 302 (§ 356).
- 10 Nor was Engels. He *owned* factories.
- 11 Karl Marx & Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (3rd rev. ed.; Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976), 60.
- 12 Bob Black, “Chomsky on the Nod,” *Defacing the Currency: Selected Writings, 1992-2012* (Berkeley, CA: LBC Books, 2012), 131. I have said the same about anarchists who think that Murray Bookchin is an anarchist. Black, *Anarchy after Leftism*, esp. ch. 5; Bob Black, *Nightmares of Reason*, available online at The Anarchy Library. Bookchin — uncharacteristically honest — eventually announced that he was not an anarchist, and never had been. I wait, with more hope than expectation, for Chomsky to follow suit.
- 13 Black, *Anarchy after Leftism*, 140.
- 14 An exception: *Why Work? Arguments for the Leisure Society*, ed. Vernon Richards (London: Freedom Press, 1983). I did read this book before writing my essay, although not before delivering the speech the essay is based on (that was in 1980). My copy was a gift (in 1984) from Gregor Jamroski, who shoplifted it from Left Bank Books in Seattle. The anthology is very uneven, but includes some good stuff, such as Tony Gibson’s “Who Will Do the Dirty Work?” which I alluded to in my essay. Some academics borrowed the title, probably unwittingly: Robin Patric Clair et al., *Why Work? The Perceptions of a “Real Job” and the Rhetoric of Work Through the Ages* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2008).

- 15 My argument is taken over in its entirety by James Bowen, "The Curse of the Drinking Classes," in *Twenty-First Century Anarchism: Unorthodox Ideas for the New Millennium*, ed. Jon Purkis & James Bowen (London: Cassell, 1997), 151-169 — who doesn't cite me.
 - 16 Andre Gorz, *Paths to Paradise: On the Liberation from Work*, tr. Malcolm Imrie (London: Pluto Press, 1985). I didn't see his text until much later, and I'm sure he didn't see mine.
 - 17 Jeremy Rifkin, *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995); Bob Black, "What's Wrong with This Picture? A Critique of a Neo-Futurist's Vision of the Decline of Work," available online at The Anarchy Library and elsewhere.
 - 18 Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011). I haven't seen this one.
 - 19 "Immediatism vs. Capitalism," in *Immediatism: Essays by Hakim Bey* (AK Press: Edinburgh, Scotland & San Francisco, CA, 1994), 20-21. See also Alfredo M. Bonanno, *Let's Destroy Work, Let's Destroy the Economy*, tr. Jean Weir (London: Elephant Books; Berkeley, CA: Ardent Press, 2013); CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective, *Work* (self-published, 2011). I had already made the point about leisure: "Leisure is nonwork for the sake of work" (18). Someone else who has made the point is White, *Education and the End of Work*, 11-12, 62-63. So did Karl Marx: "Free time — which includes leisure time as well as time for higher activities — naturally transforms anyone who enjoys it into a different person, and it is this different person who then enters the direct process of production." Karl Marx, *The Grundrisse*, ed. & tr. David McLellan (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971), 148.
 - 20 Black, "Debunking Democracy" in *Defacing the Currency*, 3-33. It's also available as a pamphlet from C.A.L. Press. H writes: "What if Black's critique is a critique of democratic decision making in the work place specifically?" No, my critique of democracy is a critique of democracy. "If we wanted to start this conversation" — who's stopping him? — "we would have to discuss the difference between democratically controlled workplaces under capitalism and under capitalism." They would probably not be very different, inasmuch as they would be the same. H must have meant to contrast democratically controlled workplaces with undemocratically controlled workplaces, but that's not what he says. Instead he says that "under capitalism" there exist "democratically controlled workplaces"!
 - 21 "Useful Work versus Useless Toil," in *Political Writings of William Morris*, ed. A.L. Morton (New York: International Publishers, 1973), 95; reprinted in *Why Work?* (Richards ed.), 35-52. Morris's essay was first published, by an anarchist publisher (Freedom Press), in 1896. Morris also wrote the utopian novel *News from Nowhere* and some minor classics in the fantasy genre.
 - 22 I mentioned some names, but I deliberately didn't provide references, or an assigned reading list, because, unlike today's class struggle anarchists, I was not writing primarily for white middle class college students. I tried to write something that real-life workers might read and appreciate, and, in the many years since 1985, I've received many testimonials suggesting that I've had a limited measure of success. A number of people have told me, or told others, that I changed their lives. I receive these reports with mixed feelings.
- However, for the footnotes not provided in "The Abolition of Work," there are now the footnotes provided in Black, "Primitive Affluence: A Postscript to Sahlins," *Friendly Fire*, 34-41, and the references provided in "Zerowork Revisited," *Defacing the Currency*, "Suggested Readings," 333-37.
- 23 A book title: J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, ed. J.O. Urmson & Marina Sbisa (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975). The book is short, interesting, and refreshingly free of politics, and it has nothing to do with the issue at hand.
 - 24 Bob Black, "Class Struggle Social Democrats, or, The Press of Business," *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* No. 64 (Fall/Winter 2007): 26-29, available online at The Anarchist Library. There is now a consistently anarchist/autonomist publisher/distributor, Little Black Cart, and several other genuine anarchist publishers, such as C.A.L. Press, Eberhardt Press, and Elephant Editions.
 - 25 Black, "Zerowork Revisited," 332.
 - 26 Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*, tr. Mark Poster (St. Louis, MO: Telos Press, 1975).

ANARCHIST PRACTICES HAVE HAD AN unquestionable presence in the cycle of resistance that recently swept from Tunis to Madrid to New York. Far from a novelty, the political toolbox of seizing public space, nonviolent disruption, and anti-authoritarian organizing arrived on the scene practically ready-made, having been synthesized over the previous decade of anti-capitalist resistance, itself the product of the legacies of yet earlier convergences between radical forms of feminism, anti-militarism, environmentalism, and anti-fascism, to name a few. Perhaps the most evident anarchist influence that has carried over from the alter-globalization movement

is the commitment to horizontal organizing. While during the latter protest wave anarchists had to constantly resist attempts by NGOs and Leninist groups to squeeze the emergent grassroots militancy into formal top-down structures (occasionally with whatever semblance of electoral democracy), in the recent wave non-hierarchical organizing was the widely accepted mode of operation.

Yet as much as movements like Occupy Wall Street made use of the abovementioned tactical toolbox, this was more often than not often geared towards a politics of demand towards governments, protesting policies that pass onto the public the costs of a crisis created — as

INSURRECTIONARY PATRIOTISM

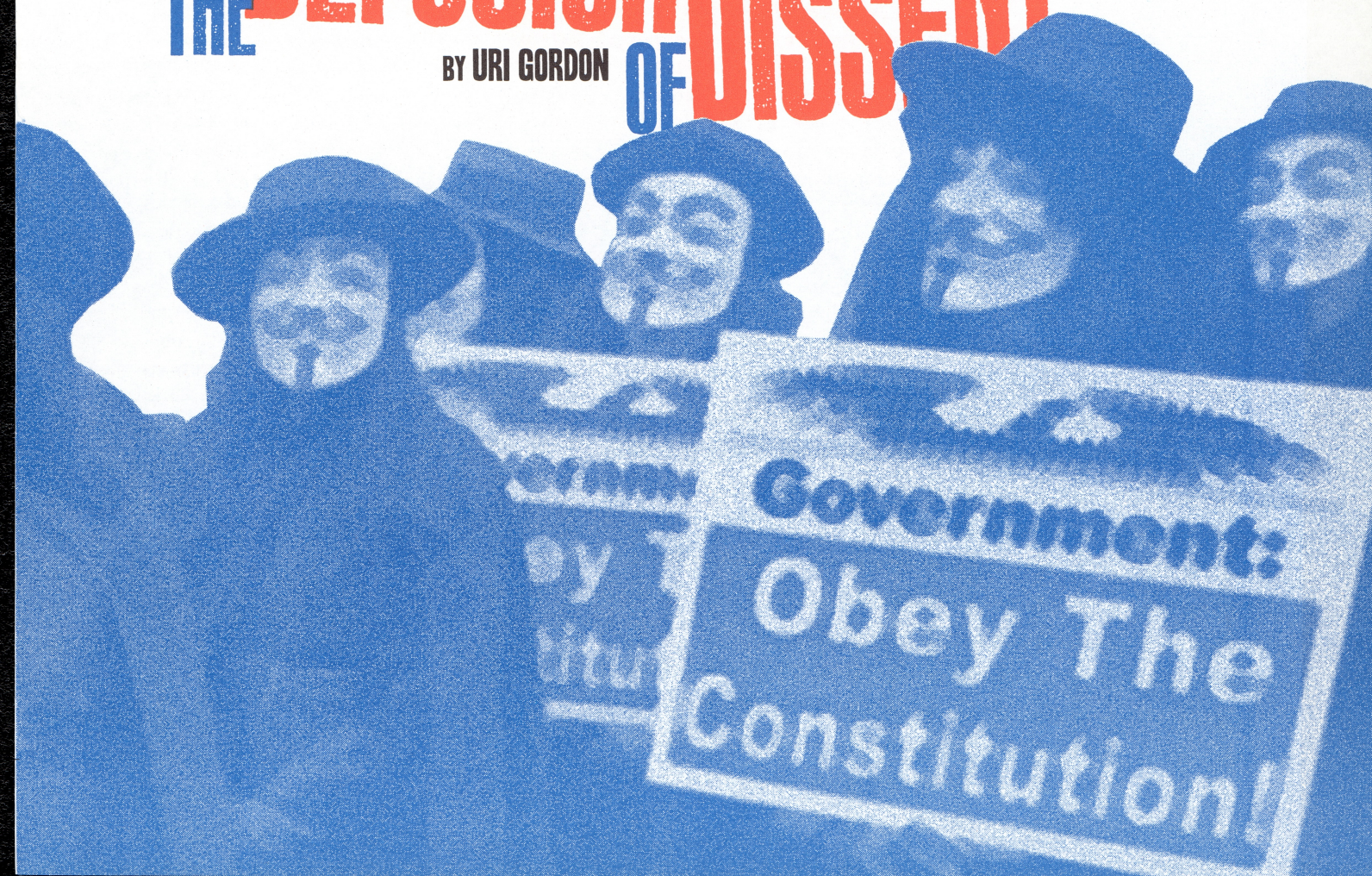
the argument ran — by an under-regulated financial sector.¹ With some notable exceptions (including, perhaps most prominently, Occupy Oakland),² much of the civil resistance in Western Europe and North America saw the root causes of the crisis in terms of a corruption of democratic government by corporate interests and a lack of public influence on decision-making. To portray this as a retreat from previous, more explicitly revolutionary stances would be a mistake. What in fact happened was a rebooting of social struggle, with anarchist and other veterans failing to carry over the radicalism of the alter-globalization cycle into a new and much wider movement. On the one hand, the struggles of the early '10s represented an intensification of social conflict, with the previous cycle's focus on the injustice of IMF and WTO policies towards the poorer world turning inwards now that the

effects of the same policies had come home to roost in the core capitalist countries. On the other hand, the calls for thorough transformation heard from those employing the most direct and decentralist forms of organizing and action were replaced by much meeker calls for a re-establishment of the welfare state or, even less, an end to plutocratic corruption.

Indeed, while movements associated with the Occupy banner and their sister movements worldwide often adopted quintessentially anarchistic modes of organizing — non-hierarchical, decentralized, consensus-based, and mindful of the need to overcome enactments of domination among the participants — their outward demands have remained far removed from the implications of their own internal political process. The contradiction here is glaring: on the one hand thorough disillusionment with the

AND THE DEFUSION OF DISSSENT

BY URI GORDON





state, and on the other hand a belief that it can somehow be reformed to contain participatory democracy.

While anarchists surely have no expectation that any given cycle of protest will grow and radicalise uncontrollably towards a global revolution, I would venture to say that they *have* come to see protest waves as important moments of concentration that could have a lasting residue in social movement memory. In such a context, anarchists have come to expect that their interventions can establish not only practices but also political content that will carry over from one cycle to another. However, this hoped-for ratchet effect has only partially manifested itself. We find that anarchists have been far less successful in influencing the content rather than form of recent resistance.

The most immediate example of this comes from Occupy Wall Street itself, where explicitly anarchist initiative still failed to sway the movement's content. The first call for this convergence, issued by Adbusters magazine, was squarely within the liberal-regulatory framework, demanding "that Barack Obama ordain a Presidential Commission tasked with ending the influence money has over our representatives in Washington."³ This line was not, however, accepted by the group who came together to actually organize the event. Its own call to action expressed a much more sober view of the relationship between state and corporations:

Money, it has been said, has taken over politics. In truth, we say, money has always been part of the capitalist political system. A system based on the existence of have and have nots, where inequality is inherent to the system, will inevitably lead to a situation where the haves find a way to rule, whether by the sword or by the dollar... If you agree that state and corporation are merely two sides of the same oppressive power structure then you might be one of us.⁴

Yet hardly two weeks had passed and the General Assembly of the occupation, now with much wider participation, reverted to a stance much closer to the initial one:

a democratic government derives its just power from the people, but corporations do not seek consent to extract wealth from the people and the Earth... no true democracy is attainable when the process is determined by economic power. We come to you at a time when corporations, which place profit over people, self-interest over justice, and oppression over equality, run our governments.⁵

Conversations with participants in OWS indicate that this reversion to reformism was at the same time in contradiction to the implications of internal horizontality *and its result*. For most participants this was — as with the alter-globalization movement — the first experience of mass political mobilization. Lacking the healthy cynicism garnered from previous struggles, newly empowered protesters seek immediate and tangible victories, and as products of a statist education they naturally expect this to come from their elected officials. Add to this pressure from bandwagoneering journalists, unionists, and politicians who call for the movement to coalesce around clear demands (a Tobin tax, more or different regulation, institutions to replace the IMF/WTO/World Bank, or an electoral campaign), and the appeal of reformist agendas becomes very powerful. Once this content is cast into the deliberately open and inclusive political space created by anarchists, it tends to move the collective process towards its lowest common denominator, with anarchists often allowing this to take place since they realize the participants must sow and reap their own disillusionment.

It was to the abovementioned about-face that the CrimethInc. group responded with their

open letter to the Occupy encampments, stressing that

No government—that is to say, no centralized power—will ever willingly put the needs of common people before the needs of the powerful. It's naïve to hope for this. The center of gravity in this movement has to be our freedom and autonomy, and the mutual aid that can sustain those—not the desire for an “accountable” centralized power. No such thing has ever existed... the important thing is not just to make demands upon our rulers, but to build up the power to realize our demands ourselves.⁶

Indeed, since its inception the capitalist state has served the very same interests as those that control it today. Far from going off course, today's democracies are merely being exposed for the sham they have always been. If there is one thing to add to this understanding, it is to point to a particular ideological trope which reinforces the illusion of a once-accountable, allegedly real democracy. I would like to argue here that a central idea in the theoretical underpinnings of liberal democracy — the idea of a right of rebellion — sits at the root of a *patriotic* sentiment which ultimately defeats social transformation. The threat of insurrection is defused by its very enshrinement in the founding myth of an unequal society. Thus most talk of rebellion becomes a ritualistic return to the nation-state's own foundation point, generating loyalty to the nation (i.e. the state) supposedly founded on genuinely democratic aspirations.

What I am about to say is relevant particularly to the United States, but I think it can be extended, with the relevant alterations, to any Western nominal democracy as well as to the post-colonial world. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize the exploratory and tentative nature of what follows, and to invite criticism and clarification by readers.

Perhaps the most familiar expression of the right to rebellion is found in French, in Article 35 of the 1793 *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*:

When the government violates the rights of the people, insurrection is for the people and for each portion of the people the most sacred of rights and the most indispensable of duties.⁷

Yet this was by no means an original statement. Indeed, the American Declaration of Independence had already asserted, among those truths held self-evident,

That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends [Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness], it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.⁸

This assertion, in turn, is rooted in a much older tradition which may be traced back to two famous proclamations of the 13th century — the Magna Carta of King John of England (1213) and the Golden Bull of King András II of Hungary (1222). The famous Clause 61 of the Magna Carta states that if the King breaks any one of its articles and fails to correct the

lacking the healthy cynicism garnered from previous struggles, newly empowered protesters seek immediate and tangible victories, and as products of a statist education they naturally expect this to come from their elected officials

transgression, then the barons “may distrain upon and assail us in every way possible, with the support of the whole community of the land, by seizing our castles, lands, possessions, or anything else saving only our own person and those of the queen and our children, until they have secured such redress as they have determined upon.”⁹ The Golden Bull, for its part, states that “should we, or any of our successors, at any time be disposed to infringe upon any of these our orders, the bishops, as well as the other lords and the nobles of the realm, shall be at liberty... to oppose and contradict us and

our successors, forever, without incurring the penalty of treason."¹⁰

These early statements, however, do not go as far as the American and French Declarations. The right to rebellion that they recognize is temporary. The king is not to be deposed, only coerced into compliance. Thus the Magna Carta continues: "When redress has been obtained, they shall resume their old relations towards us." What we are dealing with here is not insurrection, but civil disobedience. The latter term

let us put aside for a moment the historical fact that no government was ever established by contract among dissociated free individuals, but only by usurpation during the Neolithic and subsequently by conquest

should be clearly distinguished from the former: insurrection is a mass armed uprising to overthrow a regime; civil disobedience is selective refusal to obey some of the regime's laws or policies, as a means of pressuring it into changing them. Tax strikes, refusal of conscription, and sitting in the "wrong" section of a segregated bus all belong to this category. There is no intention to overthrow the regime, only to force it to negotiate.¹¹

The genuine foundation of the right to rebellion belongs to the Age of Enlightenment, with its faith in natural law and universal rights. It was John Locke in his *Second Treatise on Government* — the theoretical defence of the English Revolution of 1688 — who penned its most explicit and influential formulation:

Whenever the legislators endeavour to take away, and destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power, they put themselves into a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any farther obedience... [and] have a right to resume their original liberty, and, by the establishment of a new legislative... provide for their own safety and security.¹²

"Their original liberty": here we find the philosophical foundation of the right of insurrection. This is the account of government as founded on a social contract among free and equal human beings. In the so-called state of nature, people are assumed to be utterly separate and sovereign. The political community is founded as a free compact, and representative government comes to the world as a matter of expedience, once the community grows too large to settle every issue by direct democracy. Thus "every man, by consenting with others to make one body politic under one government, puts himself under an obligation, to every one of that society, to submit to the determination of the majority."¹³ It is this view of government as a contract that justifies its dissolution. Robespierre was appealing to the same idea when he spoke against granting King Louis XVI a trial, stating that "when a nation has been forced to resort to the right of insurrection, it returns to a state of nature as regards its tyrant."¹⁴

Now let us put aside for a moment the historical fact that no government was ever established by contract among dissociated free individuals, but only by usurpation during the Neolithic and subsequently by conquest.¹⁵ Let us also abstract from the basic criticism of natural rights as wishful thinking, which caused Jeremy Bentham to refer to the French Declaration as "nonsense upon stilts."¹⁶ Even when taken on its own terms, is not the notion of a quasi-constitutional right to rebellion patently absurd?

To begin with, if some insurrections are lawful and others are not, who is to make the decision? Surely not the government itself. Is it then a matter of purely subjective judgment? Indeed, there is no shortage of groups who sincerely feel that government has betrayed its constitutional limits and invoke the right of insurrection for their cause. A prominent example is right-wing American militias and their supporters in the National Rifle Association, whose propaganda represents anything from legalized abortion to socialized healthcare as a step to destroy the republic and instate a dictatorship. Do such groups have a legal right to rebellion against the government?¹⁷ But more basically, is it not simply illogical to assert a right that contradicts the very foundation of sovereignty on which it rests? How can a sovereign polity be expected to embrace the means of its own destruction?

One response to these dilemmas is to claim that the right of insurrection is, indeed, fundamentally illogical. As Abraham Lincoln said in his first inaugural address, "it is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination... it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself."¹⁸ Earlier, during the South Carolina Nullification Crisis, Andrew Jackson similarly proclaimed that a "revolutionary act, may be morally justified by the extremity of oppression; but to call it a constitutional right, is confounding the meaning of terms, and can only be done through gross error, or to deceive."¹⁹ Thus it might be asserted that the right of insurrection vanishes once democracy has been established, since the constitution now contains means for the peaceful replacement of government.

However, the contradictory nature of the right of insurrection conceals a deeper truth. It is a founding myth that stands at the core of the liberal doctrine of citizenship. The right to rebellion is at the same time the denial of the Law and its premise. The liberal-republican system "presupposes the permanent exercise of the very same right that makes it impossible. The right to rebellion appears as simultaneously destructive and foundational of the liberal-republican concept of Law; it negates Law, yet, it is at its basis, it represents, in short, its 'constitutive Other'."²⁰

The right to rebellion is therefore not simply a logical fallacy or a self-serving figure of speech. Instead, it is a subtle ideological device whose insidious function is to generate loyalty to the basic institutions of the capitalist state, even as it portrays them as contingent. By buying into the myth that the basic arrangement of power under which we live is founded on a past revolutionary act of The People — rather than on an act of usurpation by a minority of propertied white men — we, the subjects of this power, actively participate in granting it its basic legitimacy. Moreover, this legitimacy is attached, through the myth of insurrectionary foundations, to a distinctly *patriotic* loyalty — in other words, to liberal nationalism. The supposed foundation of the state in a popular and democratic revolution, genuinely animated by freedom and equality, raises sentiments of pride in the "body politic" — that ephemeral ghost manufactured by the state. It stands the state thus founded

qualitatively above others, marking it as somehow purified of its oppressiveness.

As a result, the appeal to insurrection as a founding event ensures that we fail to question the basic institution of government. Thus, the capitalist state is preserved even as it passes through the tumults of popular revolt. In exiting one cage, we only enter into another. In drawing legitimacy for contemporary revolts from the very same myths that conceal the true nature of the system against which we are revolting, we deny

an actual revolution does not replace one set of masters with another. It overthrows class society altogether

ourselves the possibility of a more fundamental critique, and hence of true revolt and liberation.

An actual revolution does not replace one set of masters with another. It overthrows class society altogether, and replaces it with well-prepared structures of self-management, voluntary association, and mutual aid. This requires neither the appeal to a consecrated right, nor the myth of democratic citizenship. The sooner we, who struggle for social justice and ecological sanity, cast off the nostalgic myth of a lost freedom, the sooner we become capable of a revolution worthy of its name. (A)

Notes

- 1 For a discussion of this in reference to the Arab Spring see Mohammed A. Bamyeh. 2013. Anarchist Method, Liberal Intention, Authoritarian Lesson: The Arab Spring between Three Enlightenments. *Constellations* 20.2; <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cons.12031/full>
- 2 See e.g. <http://occupyoakland.org/2011/10/occupy-oakland/> and texts in Aragorn!, ed. (2012). *Occupy Everything: Anarchists in the Occupy Movement 2009-2011*. Oakland: LBC Books
- 3 *Adbusters*. 2011. A shift in revolutionary tactics. Adbusters.org blog, 13 July; <http://www.adbusters.org/blogs/adbusters-blog/occupywallstreet.html>
- 4 Occupy Wall Street. 2011. A Modest Call to Action on September 17th. [Occupywallstreet.org](http://occupywallstreet.org), 17 September. http://occupywallst.org/article/September_Revolution/

... continues on page 71

Media Reviews

Reviews by Lawrence Jarach

Anarchy does exchanges with anarchist and anti-state, anti-capitalist periodicals.

We try to review all such periodicals received, so send them to us.

anchorage anarchy

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Cargo Cults and Proletariat Image

by Jason Rodgers

I went to the 100th anniversary celebration of the Bread and Roses strike, on labor day in my new home of Lawrence, MA. In the Boston area anarchists tend toward being red anarchists (it seems), while I tend towards what might be called green, insurrectionary, or post-left positions. Nonetheless, I am allergic to dogma and like to look for a variety of avenues of affinity.

There were a number of anarchist oriented tables set up at the festival. There was also a Socialist Workers table, which I avoided as much as possible. Something weird about a middle aged, white, conchie trying to sell me books by Malcolm X. I should've asked about the Muller Plane and other esoteric aspects of Nation of Islam theology.

The Sacco and Vanzetti Commemoration society had a table set up. I engaged the fellow behind it in conversation. His thoughts were a touch scattered, but I'll give him a pass, as the Boston Sacco and Vanzetti memorial march had just happened and judging from his battered eye socket, he had participated enthusiastically.

There were two Industrial Workers of the World tables set up. One housed the New Hampshire and Maine chapters, the other housed the Boston chapter. I spoke with the Maine and New Hampshire chapters. Though we obviously came from different perspectives, they were willing to engage in

dialog. They were enthusiastic, though much of the talk seemed like a sort of sales pitch.



I attempted to talk to the Boston chapter of the IWW, but they seemed to have little interest. Any question was given a short response, with little interest in dialog. This was not due to any more pressing concerns, there were only a couple people who even approached their table. They seemed to ignore these people as well.

One strange aspect of these folks is that the younger members all seemed to be wearing a punk version of old time clothes, almost a crust tinged version of the musical Newies. I took this as a sort of steampunk fashion. Now I've been involved in punk and Discordianism, so I'm not inclined to dismiss

with leftism. He stumbled onto what I discuss elsewhere in this issue as the misuse of history: the tendency to create historical re-enactment societies instead of learning from our history so as not to be stuck in it.

Speaking of that history, Peacott fills out the remaining 10 pages with some musings about the Spanish revolution and its protagonists. As a person nearly obsessed with the history of the Spanish revolution, I was hoping for some keen insight into the manifestations of authoritarianism (for Peacott this usually means enforcing ideological dogma). Sure enough, he dives right in: defenders of "these anarchists" (not a very subtle category considering the divergence of opinions and strategies within the CNT) "took great pains to excuse their decidedly authoritarian approach to organizing and social relations in general, citing war conditions as a justification for the surrender of basic anarchist principles." Unfortunately for readers, he provides no citations of what he's read of "the huge body of literature which clearly demonstrates that the spanish revolution was anything but anarchist." Indeed, his only citation is a nearly three-page conclusion excerpted from Vernon Richards' *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution*; don't get me wrong; that's a perfectly respectable source for a critical anarchist appraisal. However, for someone like me, who is both an editor and a student of the revolutionary experiments that took place in Spain, a lack of other source material (except for a copy of the cover of *Vision on Fire: Emma Goldman on the Spanish*

Revolution) leaves me wondering (since presumably we've read the same material) how he came to his particular conclusions.

For example, that the "spanish anarchist movement was hierarchically organized from the very beginning" (he is here speaking of the CNT, despite the fact — established by several authors within the "huge body of literature" — that not all *cenetistas* were anarchist and not all anarchists were in the CNT). One could argue (and it wouldn't be the first time) that a mass-based industrial union lends itself to a certain hierarchical organizational tone — if not practice — but even so, there were attempts (mostly failures, unfortunately) by many consciously anarchist militants to mitigate against the formation of a leadership clique. A related example is his claim (presumably one that is argued in some other uncited source[s] in the "huge body of literature") that the FAI was "founded to steer the CNT in an anarchist direction," without mentioning anything about why that was perceived to be necessary by between ten and twenty thousand *faistas*.

Peacott's past as the driving force of the Boston Anarchist Drinking (the BAD in Bad Press) Brigade shows up when he finds it inexcusable that "anarchists" (which ones, where, and when? — questions an editor would demand be answered) "went so far as to impose their puritanical beliefs by closing bars and cafes, banning the use of alcohol, tobacco, and even coffee; and forcing prostitutes to give up sex work." His

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AN OCCASIONALLY PUBLISHED, small-format, 12-page zine, Joe Peacott's inimitable combination of non-anti-capitalist anarchism and a critical eye usually makes for interesting reading. This time around one of Joe's friends goes to Boston, Joe's old stomping ground, to take in the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Bread and Roses strike of 1912 and gets involved in conversations with someone from the Sacco and Vanzetti Commemoration Society and a couple of northeastern Wobblies. He comes away with a deep lack of appreciation for rituals that "recuperate dissatisfaction," which he equates (not unfairly)

horror at such actions (again, without mentioning anything about why some anarchists in some places perceived them to be necessary) is due to those anarchists abandoning (if they ever held it up as a principle in the first place) the tired cliché of pro-capitalist libertarians: “the preservation and defense of individual freedom.” Like most non-anti-capitalist anarchists, Peacott ignores the social effects and consequences of substance abuse and sex work, not to mention the reasons for many people to be drawn toward them in the first place; that might mean that those particular anarchists were not doing so for puritanical reasons, but for reasons of (in the popular vernacular of the day) social hygiene; and using the practical logic of being on a war footing (which Peacott himself has already cited as an umbrella excuse), it is perhaps too banal to point out that combat readiness during war is undercut by substance abuse and venereal disease (a quick look online at current US Army manuals and leadership guides shows that substance abuse prevention is taken quite seriously, and this article [cdn.intechopen.com/pdfs/33072/InTechSexually_transmitted_infections_among_army_personnel_in_the_military_environment.pdf] begins by quoting a 17th century French general who quipped that prostitutes killed ten times more of his men than enemy fire).

Strangely, Peacott asserts that “foreign anarchists... were well aware of the actions of the [Spanish] anarchists... But they failed to offer a thoroughgoing critique, and turned into cheerleaders for a losing team — a team that lost both the war and their anarchist principles.” While it is true that plenty of anarchist writers opted for the wrong side in that dispute (Goldman — at least publicly, Augustin Souchy, Sam Dolgoff — who was usually on the wrong side of everything!), I guess he doesn’t know of the contemporary thoroughgoing critiques of Alexander Schapiro, the representative of the AIT

(to which the CNT was affiliated) in Spain, who wrote a scathing series of assessments published in the international anarcho-syndicalist press, or those of Camillo Berneri; the one more recent book he cites (first published in 1953) is similarly scathing, its author having collaborated with Berneri before the latter was murdered by Stalinists during the May Days. Further, he says that “later anarchist writers have

I cannot blame anarchism for bad decisions that were made by human beings, who have always been subject to flattery, manipulation, and stupidity

largely fallen into the same trap.” Like the semi-official historian of the CNT, Jose Peirats, who, throughout his hefty three-volume study (published from 1951-53), continually derides those anarchists he calls “circumstantialists.” Like Stuart Christie, author of *We, the Anarchists!* (published in 2000), a study of the FAI, who roundly condemns not only the circumstantialists, but also the conservative/reformist factions within the CNT prior to the revolution and in exile after its defeat. To make such a blanket statement flies in the face of the reality of the “huge body of literature.”

But perhaps the primary problem

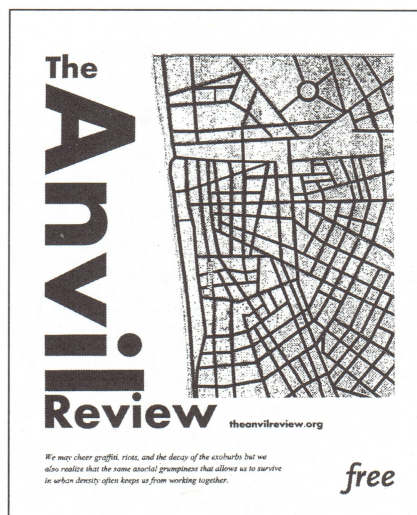
with this analysis is that it places the blame for the failures of the Spanish revolution squarely upon the entire philosophy and practice of anarchism, from the time of the First International (“Despite his writings about freedom, Bakunin’s approach to organizing was hardly different from that of Marx...”), through the Russian Revolution (“many anarchists... continued to support the bolsheviks even as they were killing and jailing russian anarchists...” and “What should be, but sadly isn’t, surprising is that anarchists continue to consider [Makhno’s] mini-police state some sort of positive example for anarchists”), and up until the present day (“today’s anarchist movement seems unable or unwilling to reject its history of tolerance of, even support for, authoritarian individuals and movements masquerading as anarchists.”).

Is it true that there have been individuals and entire tendencies associated with anarchism who have been and are authoritarian? Certainly. Is their adherence and/or lip service to being anarchist thereby suspect? Maybe. Does it verge on being anti-anarchist to aver that those about whom we might be skeptical are the epitome of anarchism? Probably not. In fact, such an objection begins to sound like a typically hostile Marxist or liberal dismissal; we skeptics might do well to make it more clear that our criticisms are *anarchist* criticisms of anarchists. Indeed, I would consider this internal critique to be a foundational aspect of the post-left anarchist trajectory, and it bears repeating.

In any case, Peacott appears to be saying that the problems, blunders, and mistaken policies promoted by the CNT’s “influential militants” (that’s what they were called in the jargon of the day) were inherent in their on-and-off adherence to the aspects of anarchist theory that Peacott dislikes. Hold on just a second. He begins his conclusion with this: “The biggest problem in Spain was that the anarchists did not really believe in the philosophy they

wrote and talked about for so many years... we need to say that those who call themselves anarchists should act like anarchists." Sorry Joe, but you can't have it both ways. Either many of the Spanish anarchists were not really anarchists (or were masquerading, or just didn't understand the importance of individual freedom or something), or they were anarchists who, in a time of existential crisis, forgot and/or abandoned and/or surrendered their principles. But blaming anarchism *tout court* for the failures of the CNT leadership is as silly as dismissing anarchist ideas and activities because of Proudhon's antisemitism and misogyny.

Let's avoid any misunderstandings: I am not a defender of any of the long list of mistakes and critical failures of the CNT's "influential militants" (and those who went along with them), whether it was to readmit the explicitly reformist *treintistas* at the Zaragoza Congress of May, 1936, or the decision to prop up the semi-autonomous government of Catalunya, or the acceptance of ministerial posts in the central government, or the militarization of the militias, or calling for a cease-fire during the Stalinist/Republican/Catalanist counter-revolutionary attack (the May Days), or the semi-acquiescence toward the suppression of the Council of Aragon, or the self-destructive campaign for unification with the Socialist UGT. But I cannot blame anarchism for those bad decisions; those bad decisions were made by human beings, who have always been subject to flattery, manipulation, and stupidity. The point is not merely to condemn the CNT's "influential militants" and those who refused to call them to task — that's the easy part — but to learn from those experiences how not to succumb to the maneuvers of professional politicians, regardless of what label they use for themselves.



The Anvil #4

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ISSUE #4 IS, AS THE EDITORS SAY, "A BIT of a pivot for us." Rather than engaging with general aspects of popular (and not so popular) culture, *The Anvil* will from now on focus on topical issues and themes. This time the theme is The City. From Wolfi's meandering tone prose to Alejandro de Acosta's review of a study of Situationist urban wandering (*dérive*) through a meditative dialog between the Old and Young Alciphron (an amusing stand-in for himself no doubt) as they wander around a city, the city (both as an idea and as a lived experience) are looked at rather abstractly. There's nothing inherently wrong or misguided with such an approach, but I found both to be less-than-satisfying. For me, living in an urban environment has its moments of beauty, but there is also noise, unpleasant odors, and incessant lighting — even in the day time. Perhaps I notice such intrusions because I like to complain... The city is a place where people from different cultures live together (sometimes with joy, sometimes not), enriching the lives of everyone; at least that's the multicultural reading of the city. Still, I've lived

in cities most of my life, with two different periods of being in the country, and I prefer cities, at least in the Bay Area. And also Berlin.

The review of a strange little book called *Witherburo* (LBC Books, 2012) begins with an even stranger second paragraph: "We have no idea who the Witherburo are but it is clear they are not from the United States. Their name is a combination of the English adverb whither and the Spanish word for donkey... Together, their name could be taken to mean, 'to what place, donkey?'" Sounds like a great insight, except for the fact that the context of the book makes it more obvious that it's a historical semi-pun, pointing to Weatherman and the Weather Underground, something of a precursor to the Metropolitan Indians of Italy (who are championed in *Witherburo*). Aside from that, *buro* is not Spanish for donkey; it means office or bureau. Donkey in Spanish is *burro*. Even with my minimal grasp of Spanish I knew this supposed insight from "Francesco Llopart" (the actual person was Francisco [not Italian] Llopart Sabate, the most famous anarchist guerrilla fighter after Franco's victory in 1939; he was eventually killed in an ambush in 1960) was mistaken.

Other reviews cover Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, plus *Desert* and *Hello*. There's also an interesting essay called "Kafka Reloaded," which is something of an updating of "The Trial" with a lot of nods to Foucault.

Rounding out this issue for me is a rather uneven review of Chris Ealham's *Anarchism and the City* (an appreciated AK Press paperback reprint of the Routledge publication *Class, Culture and Conflict in Barcelona, 1898-1937*). It seems that PG contacted Ealham directly to discuss some of the factual issues in an early draft of his review, possibly with the intent of beginning a longer correspondence. However, the exchange soon soured, mostly because Ealham couldn't take

PG's mischaracterizations seriously — especially the idea that his job is to recuperate social struggles, and that he's paid by "the State" to conduct his research — and told him so. In fact, Ealham writes, he doesn't "live from anarchist history. My Barcelona book was written mainly in my spare time and at weekends, even if I did receive travel grants from 'the state'. And now I have no 'career' — I gave up the formal University career structure when I left England." And "who would be stupid enough to try to build an academic career around anarchist history or even Spanish history? I can't think of anyone, can you? If I'd been so cynical as to pick a subject to advance up the University History career ladder, it'd be international history, which is so easy to write and constantly in demand. Or German history — that's an earner!" (Quotations from personal emails, published with permission.)

And that's where the emails ended, but that's not the end of the story. PG's review was supposed to appear in (the now-defunct?) *Social Anarchism*, and Ealham merely requested space to reply. No threat of legal action, no talking to cops, no attempt to suppress his review, and no "living off the struggle" (in addition to the book under discussion, Ealham edited the three-volume history of the CNT by Jose Peirats, published by Christie Books and reprinted by AK Press — and we all know there's no money in that). Readers of *The Anvil* and its website may have found PG's arguments solid enough to be convinced that Ealham is a villain in person who just happened to write an interesting book (at least this once), or they saw through PG's silliness and decided not to harass Ealham, or they just couldn't be bothered about this interpersonal dispute that PG tried to inflate into a World Historical Crisis. For whatever reason(s), nobody ever contacted Ealham.

PG is annoyed that there's more than a few mentions of the POUM, which he

calls "a tiny cult following the teachings of the Butcher of Kronstadt," and "a tiny organization which at that time was militarily insignificant." In the first months of the revolution, this "tiny cult" numbered perhaps as many as 10,000 (according to Orwell, who fought with them) and was able to muster more militia volunteers than the Catalan Stalinists and Republicans combined, meaning

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that it was neither "tiny" nor "militarily insignificant." But the more curious aspect is PG's insistence on calling them Trotskyists, since the only people who have the gall to falsify history like that are Stalinists (for his own reasons, Trotsky was opposed to the formation of the POUM and denounced it); there just aren't any reputable scholars or historians of the past fifty years who dare to make such an obviously inaccurate accusation. PG also insists that Ealham "repeatedly praises" them, but I didn't

find any. Ealham mentions "sexual segregation at POUM meetings," that they were "the left-wing of the Generalitat," and were eventually expelled from it. He also refers to the POUM being on the same side of the barricades as the CNT-FAI during the May Days. No praise anywhere, certainly not "repeatedly." I bring up this issue not to defend the POUM; they were a strange, authoritarian, contradictory (almost to the point of political incoherence), and unique — almost exclusively — Catalunyan formation. I am much more interested in factual history. PG, it seems, is more interested in scoring rhetorical points against Ealham through some imagined positive assessment of the role of (and therefore some guilt by association with) the anti-Stalinist Marxists of the POUM.

Which brings me to the biggest accusation PG levels at Ealham's study: its lack of women. PG complains that Ealham forgets "that the proletarian neighborhoods and the CNT were also made up of women, and these women were not passive victims of circumstance..." Further, he laments that "Mujeres Libres barely warrant a mention..." PG must not understand the existence (let alone the subtleties) of what sociologists, anthropologists, and — guess who else? historians! — call *separate spheres* (the public and private). Especially in the modern period, the private sphere was where women were supposed to remain: at home, not engaged in waged work, politics, and other forms of social interactions based on (inter)personal power conflicts. That Spanish anarchists (and not just the Spanish!) were prone to perpetuating such assumptions is precisely the reason that Mujeres Libres was organized as a formal group. But here's the problem with PG's complaint: Ealham's book is primarily about life on the streets of Barcelona (ie, the public sphere), and women didn't become prominent there (except as beggars, peddlers, and prostitutes — and occasional rioters) until

the breach of social hierarchies that characterized the revolutionary period in (especially) Catalunya from July, 1936-May, 1937. So regardless of how PG would prefer it, the fact that it was only in the last two years of Ealham's study when women began to move into the public sphere (with mostly — but thankfully not exclusively — negative reception among revolutionaries); and even though their journal began appearing in 1936, *Mujeres Libres* wasn't officially formed as a national federation until 1937, the last year of the study.

PG takes Ealham to task for being unfavorably disposed toward the insurrectionist wing of the anarchist movement (by the late 1920s consisting of, and identified more or less with, the FAI), *and rightly so*; I agree that Ealham's emphasis on the confrontational moments in FAI activism downplays the more mundane infrastructural activities of many *faistas* and *cenetistas*, and I also agree with PG that calling the confrontational *faistas* "elitist" is inaccurate. But these questions are interpretive, not factual, and people are allowed to have different opinions about them and discuss them openly. PG seems to think that because Ealham holds strong and different opinions about the role of illegalism and direct confrontations with the forces of order, that he is therefore on the wrong side of history (anarchist or not). But Ealham is not anti-anarchist, unlike plenty of other historians of the Spanish conflict, so it seems to me that his work doesn't warrant such hostility.

Should there be one or more books written in English by anarchist (or at least anarchist-positive) historians about the positive roles of both the confrontationalists in the FAI and anarchist women, both inside and outside *Mujeres Libres*? Undoubtedly. Did Ealham set out to write that book? No. PG would have preferred one that hasn't been written yet, and so his primary complaint comes down to Ealham's book not being the one that PG wanted to read.

Fifth Estate

#389 (Summer 2013)

and #390 (Fall 2013)

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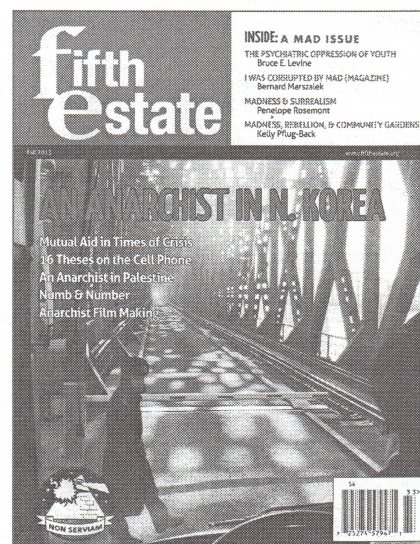
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ALTHOUGH *FE* STALWART WALKER Lane credits Sunfrog/Sissy Sabotage/(Anu)Bonobo/Andrew William Smith almost singlehandedly with sustaining *FE* for almost twenty years, the period of his editorship was probably the magazine's worst era. The downward spiral from David Watson's cutting-edge anarchic critique of Bookchin's Social Ecology sham into the dreary pit of irrelevant psychedelic paeans to Allen Ginsberg was painful to watch/read; at one point it felt like *FE* was like a leftist *USA Today*, with its one-page essays that had almost nothing to do with a critique of technologized society or anarcho-primitivism. Things began to look up again when other folks took on editorial responsibilities every other issue, but that sidelong excursion away from the hippie shit coming out of Tennessee was only temporary. Thankfully, it's been several years since Andy's involvement, and *FE* has started to look and feel like its old self in some important ways. Biting critical voices have reappeared, tackling (among other important topics) war, alienation, and prisoner support; John Zerzan's often important contributions are also back; one can almost chart the near-demise and resurrection of *FE* by the years of his absence and subsequent return.

Unfortunately, Andy returned for the "Sex and Anarchy" issue (#389). Older and sober (and possibly, in Lane's words, more "mature"), Andy has abandoned his bohemian extravagance and become fully integrated into the bourgeois mainstream; he is "now happily engaged in a conventional marriage and is a respected academic" (Lane's quote, my shivers). Andy now accepts that he was "an alcoholic, drug addict, and probably



a sex/porn/intimacy addict." Are readers supposed to be impressed? Let's face it: medicalizing behavior patterns by defining addiction as a disease is a polite way for people to deflect attention from their choices to be irresponsible assholes. In his contribution "Polyamory and Power: A Confession and Critique," Andy, rather than recognizing that he tried and failed at not being an asshole, seems to blame the (admittedly substantial) challenges of being poly for his own inability to navigate successfully in its treacherous waters.

Regardless, the main problem is precisely that Andy, like most moralists

who are ashamed of their previous antics, has written a Confession. What is a confession without guilt? What is a confession without an implicit warning to readers not to stray down the same path of ruin and destruction? Among other points, a reader spotted and commented (one of two negative responses printed in #390) that, "If the author's use of anecdotal first person narratives to extrapolate and make wholly unsubstantiated broad claims about human sexuality and the underdeveloped scattered logic of the entire article weren't enough to annoy the shit out of its readers, the uncritical praise for gay marriage would certainly put anyone still reading over the edge. The article's culminating plug for monogamy and marriage as 'an enduring social form for good reason' should be horrifying to us all." Agreed. And for all the mainstream propriety to which he's become accustomed, Andy's response shows that, at base, he's still a mealy-mouthed hippie: "My perspective on polyamory and marriage was just that — a perspective and not a position... my article was a personal narrative... love should have multiple ways to flourish...including even ones that *some people* would see *on the surface* as reinforcing the status quo" (my emphasis). If it had been meant as a personal narrative, then the subtitle should have been "A Personal Narrative." As it actually exists, the subtitle is clearly meant as a cautionary tale. His responses are as unconvincing as his initial assertions.

The theme of #390 is "Mad," and while not as exciting a topic as sex, the contributions are far more interesting. The single most fascinating essay is by Bruce Levine, a practicing psychologist, who looks specifically at young people who get diagnosed with mental illness because they answer "yes" to the

following (among other) questions: "Do you hate coercion and domination?" and "Do you love freedom?" Then you too may suffer from Oppositional Defiant Disorder. As if hating being pushed around is a disorder! The role of psychologists and psychiatrists in the maintenance and extension of

one can almost chart the near-demise and resurrection of *FE* by the years of Zerzan's absence and subsequent return

mechanisms of social control can't be explained more clearly.

In sum, it's great to see *FE* getting back to being a location for a variety of critical voices.

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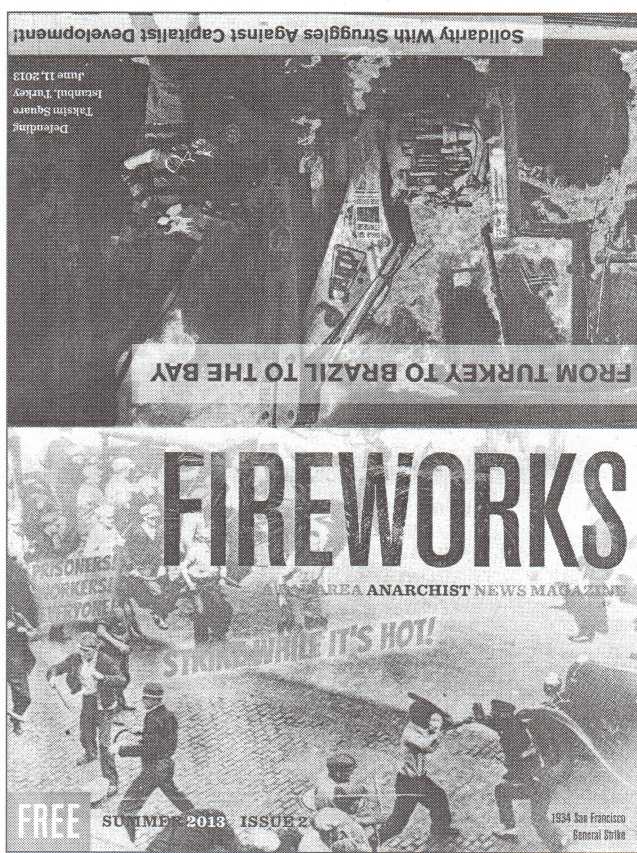
COMPARISONS OF THIS NEWISH paper with *Slingshot* and *The Anvil* are inevitable. All three appear on newsprint; all three are produced in the Berkeley/Oakland area; all three are free. But that's where the similarities end. Where *Slingshot's* voice is deliberately not intellectual and *The Anvil* is, *Fireworks* inhabits the region sort of in between them (if readers can take the first two as representing that polarity). The style is short (mostly one-page) articles, easy to finish without the innumerable (and often confusing) page turns required by *Slingshot*,

even though *Fireworks* is half the size, and without the heady abstractions and name-dropping that clutter a lot of the contributions in *The Anvil*. The editors of *Fireworks* appear to be aiming their paper at smart activist types, people who want to know important things about what they're doing, but who are probably too busy doing those important things to read more than a few pages at any one sitting. The problem for me, though, is that there's not really room for explanations; that's where the activist orientation is most obvious: the authors and editors share many assumptions about what they're reporting on, so much so that the topics and strategies are presented as

self-evidently important and worthwhile. For someone more accustomed to questioning assumptions, however, I found the tone a little too earnest and self-assured.

A primary topic of several articles in both the first two issues concern gentrification, and I'm happy to report that the *Fireworks* analysis is far more sophisticated than the facile sub-Maoism of those who obliviously repeat the tired and factually unsustainable line "White Hipsters = Gentrification." This is especially true with "A letter from a resident of the 5th avenue marina" in issue #2; almost all the artists who live there could be considered white hipsters, yet their displacement by a consortium of local developers with Chinese investors shows that the niche the residents created for themselves was not the first (or second or even third) wave of pricing out the previous long-term poorer renters (who don't exist) to make the area residentially palatable for yuppies and dot.commies. Each issue contains an article that comes at gentrification from a bit of a strange angle; the first concerns public art, the second parklets.

The first, an allegedly "ongoing column about the war over art and public space in a gentrifying city" (it did not appear



in #2, nor does it appear on the website) by Cat Graph called “Art on Fire, Please” takes up the topic of sanctioned public art, using the prominent example of an installation by Burning Man’s Black Rock Art Foundation as her_his foil. The location was another plaza that was contested by a radical fraction of Occupy Oakland during several encounters with OPD, and the author rightly calls into question the collusion of BRAF with local municipal officials and the NEA to create acceptable public art (the kind that will increase the value of an area as opposed to graffiti and other forms of extralegal spacial enhancement). The author then insists that the move of certain artists to gain legal respectability and financial rewards (aka, Selling Out) is not only epitomized by the sculptures that decorate the area near 19th and Telegraph, but also by the mosaics on public garbage cans and the paintings

on electrical boxes, which are all integral to “the war on poor, black and brown people.” Sorry, I just don’t see that particular continuum; indeed, it is merely asserted. Perhaps the tiled sunbursts, spirals, reptiles, and hummingbirds are nothing more than a banal distraction from the vagaries and challenges of urban existence, but I appreciate those paintings and mosaics that appear on previously unartistic spots — swatches of expressive color in an otherwise relentlessly drab cement, glass, and metal environment.

The goofiness continues in #2 with Samuel Smithereens’ “Parklets: Prophecy of a Class’ Collapse.” These miniature green spaces, displacing car parking by creating seating areas at cafes, bars, and restaurants (“38 installed in San Francisco, several in Oakland”) are seen by the author as “coincid[ing] with the yupster contingent,” along side of which “is the luxury

economy springing up in its service, and subsequent gentrification.” That’s some nice hyperbole, but it gets better/worse. My favorite part: “They are built with planks of wood, floating concrete slabs or brick and often feature plant-life, bike parking, tables and chairs.” The horror! “Like the shrubbery adorning them, parklets are rootless [!] by design and not physically integrated into the urban space. They are not built to last.” Shouldn’t radicals pushing for the irreversible destruction of urban and industrial civilization then celebrate that very non-absorption? That impermanence? Shouldn’t we approve of *more* plant life, *fewer* parking spaces, easier access for bicycles? More gems litter the remainder of the rant: “indiscriminate spending... Upstart money... yupster decadence... damage to pre-existing communities... parklets commodify public space [it hadn’t been until the advent of parklets?!]...” One more

INDUSTRIAL WORKER

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The Story And Struggle Of Starbucks Workers In Chile

Interview by Adam Weaver

During a week-long visit to Santiago to connect with social movement and political organizations, I had the chance to meet with Andrés Giordano, the president of the Starbucks Workers Union in Chile. Organized as an independent union beginning in 2009, they have a supportive relationship with their U.S. counterparts in the IWW's Starbucks Workers Union. On Sept. 22, I took the subway out to the middle-class suburbs of Santiago to meet him at his store, which was where the union effort began in 2009. Andrés is currently a student, previously in photography and now studying music, and has worked at his store for about eight years, with six years as a shift supervisor. He was excited to tell the story of their union, completely organized and led by rank-and-file workers, as well as to discuss their current negotiations and struggles. You can stay in touch with them

Industrial Worker (IW): Could you describe the issues that motivated you to first start organizing?

Andrés Giordano (AG): Well, the first main issue was that the company decided to lay off workers from every store. Starbucks decided that they had too many workers for the operation. So, in my store, we went from being like 25 partners to being 13 or 14, and that caused a huge impact on the team. So we started to write complaints to the main office, through the human resources (HR) department. The company didn't take that too well and fired some of the people or took reprisals. Two partners at my store and at least one other from another store that did this got fired. So, we decided to seek legal protection and organized as a union.

I remember one of the biggest cases was a partner named Andy Israel, who



assertion among many is that “once these monetized outposts of public space are no longer profitable, they will be destroyed.” Why not then agitate for their expansion at the expense of business owners, as a way of both helping those businesses outspend themselves, and as a way of getting “pre-existing communities” to create their own non-commodified parklets (ie not connected to the “luxury economy”) that can serve as publicly reclaimed green spaces for guerrilla gardening and/or fresh vegetable barter networks? Alas, the main point Samuel makes is that (presumably because the value and wealth in the “luxury economies” is unsustainable — as opposed to the permanent service economy?) economic crises occur in cycles, and that the parklets are somehow just as short-sighted and impermanent, but permanently damaging “to communities.” The analogy is faulty; micro and macro are forcibly entwined in order to make a rhetorical point, which is that Samuel Smithereens sees parklets as the most visible manifestation of irresponsible and “indiscriminate” consumption.

So just as I smile a little when I see the painted boxes and tiled garbage

cans, I often let out a little sigh of satisfaction when, also regardless of the source, I see people sitting with plants while they encroach on the tyranny of the automobile. The more parklets there are, the easier it will be to make them extralegally. I say, “Ten, Twenty, Many Parklets!”

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THE WOBBLIES HAVE BEEN AROUND for over a hundred years; if only there had been some tactical and strategic continuity between the first several generations and those of today. Alas, splits over centralization vs decentralization, affiliations to or expulsions from political parties, defections to CP-controlled unions... not to mention vigilante attacks and official state repression, have all taken a toll on this unique, semi-syndicalist, (not exclusively) anarchist-influenced, direct

action-focused industrial union. Some good history is placed in the center spread if this issue, including a profile of fellow worker Helen Keller, a quick overview of nine Wobblies who fought in the Spanish Civil War (two of whom actually fought with anarchist militias, while the other seven fought in the Stalinist International Brigades), and the longest article: “Re-remembering the Mexican IWW.” The previous two-page spread memorializes the Wobblies or bystanders who, between 1909 and 1974 (the last two after a gap of 25 years, and perhaps tellingly, none since) were “killed for organizing, striking, taking direct action, or for carrying a red card. They were shot, stabbed, beaten, tortured, starved, strangled, lynched, drowned, disappeared and executed.” Quite sobering. That’s why it leaves something of a bitter aftertaste when reading about contemporary workplace struggles the IWW is engaged in around the world: Starbucks workers in Chile, clothing retailers in Scotland, pizza makers in Wisconsin, and high school teachers in Santa Cruz, California. The gap in history is not only about repression; it’s also, sadly, about how the IWW no longer make the bosses tremble. Now baristas and other underemployed/precarious workers are the best the Wobs can attract, aside from workplaces like an occasional cinema, recycling center, or fabric store. Wobblies once talked about creating a new society inside the shell of the old, but today’s IWW can’t seem to manage to be more than the shell of its old self. (For a good look at history concerning the Wobblies, see the essay “Beautiful Losers: The Historiography of the Industrial Workers of the World” by Bob Black, available here: <http://www.inspiracy.com/black/beautifullosers.html>. From the introduction: “The Industrial Workers of the World — the IWW — was the most important radical organization, and the most radical important organization, in the United States in the early twentieth century.”)

WHAT'S THE USE OF HISTORY?

BY LAWRENCE JARACH | LAWRENCE@ANARCHYMAG.COM

THE PAST IS MUCH MORE THAN a catalog of dead people and destroyed projects, but why bother studying it? We learn where we come from, what formative processes (ideas, projects, events) have been, who the interesting personalities were, and how they all interacted to get us to where we are at present.¹ Learning from revolutionary successes and failures provides us with important analytical tools to use when trying to discern useful (and possibly improved) strategies for achieving our goals. For anarchists, history's perpetual losers, this is primarily a negative project: trying to learn from the many defeats, missteps, dead-ends, and tragedies that have littered our history.²

Abuse of History

IN THE AGE OF THE POPULARITY of subaltern discourse, there's a tendency among certain commentators and analysts to condemn and/or dismiss entire philosophies as truncated or otherwise unworthy of study because particular theorists and writers ignored (or at least didn't consciously acknowledge) the existence of oppressed minorities. Unfortunately, the moral outrage that accompanies almost all such analyses make it difficult for Stirnerian amorlists (something all of us post-left anarchists allegedly yearn to be) to take them seriously. One

example is that anarchist philosophy and history are decidedly patriarchal and Eurocentric; but is that enough of a reason to discard the analyses and conclusions of most anarchists? Most anarchists would reply in the negative.

The various attempts to correct this gap/oversight have been frustratingly unappealing. Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt's demagogic *Black Flame* (plus Schmidt's equally unpleasant sequel *Cartography of Revolutionary Anarchism*) and Jason Adams' "Non-Western Anarchisms" suffer by focusing on people and projects they happen to find congenial, regardless of them having — or, more often, *not* having — actual similarities to generally recognizable local (non-syndicalist) anarchists and their associated projects. The implication is that anarchic ideas and projects don't really need (and might even be better off without) European theorists for inspiration.³ This perspective comes with a convenient pre-emptive mechanism for responding to criticism; the authors can accuse those of us who remain skeptical of their conclusions of being — that's right: Eurocentric. Similarly, non-radical feminists can point to the dearth of women anarchist icons (even as they expropriate the image — certainly not the reality! — of Goldman) to conclude that anarchist ideas and practices have nothing to offer for the liberation of women, and any woman who says

otherwise is not sufficiently feminist.

Despite the repeated assertions of the most vulgar postmodernists and poststructuralists, context remains important; anachronistic moral condemnations serve no one. Yes, we can and must call into question the scarcity of women and non-Europeans in the visible history of most anarchist projects and the most talked-about theories, but it's much more satisfying to find and champion the places where such topics were actually discussed and acted upon, especially when they were unpopular. For example, Louise Michel working with Kanakas against the French colonial administration during her exile in New Caledonia after the Paris Commune⁴; Malatesta and other Italian anarchists fighting with Egyptians against the British⁵; Wobblies specifically organizing non-white workers⁶; Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman and Mujeres Libres discussing the women question versus (first wave) feminism⁷; *cenetistas* entering into negotiations with the anti-colonial leader Abd el-Krim for the liberation of Spanish Morocco at the beginning of the revolution.⁸ In addition, writers, activists, and *translators*, like the Flores Magón brothers in Mexico, Ōsugi Sakae and Noe Itō in Japan, Liu Shifu in China, and countless others less well-known in English, did much to popularize anarchist ideas in their respective countries.

Ignorance of History

MORE THAN A DECADE AGO I invited myself to a meeting meant to gather local activists together in order to create a formal membership anarchist organization in the Bay Area. Among the documents handed out, the organizers had composed a set of analyses called "Models of Revolution," providing very brief (and remarkably uncritical) summaries about several groups that were not anarchist: the ANC, the League of Revolutionary [Black] Workers, the zapatistas, the Black Panther Party, the IRA, and the German autonomen; the implication was that there are no anarchist models of revolution, or at least none that were relevant. When someone (not me this time!) asked why they had not included any documentation or discussion about the anarchists in Spain, one of the organizers said, almost scornfully, "Everyone knows about Spain." Even if that were true (which it isn't — see my reviews elsewhere in this issue), what harm would it have done to include a few paragraphs about the FAI, arguably the most successful anarchist formal cadre organization ever? It certainly would have been more inspirational to anarchists than invoking Stalinist models.

Sham History

ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WITH anarchist history (and sometimes regular history as well) arises when people find some project or event they like (or dislike), usually for moral or ideological reasons, and use that framework to describe something they would like to have existed (or not existed) in the past.

My most personal encounter with sham history occurred when I engaged in a short but heated online debate with a comrade from the UK about the term *especifismo*. His argument was that,

since they used the term for themselves currently, it is also an accurate term to describe the particular organizational trajectory of the Uruguayan FAU in the late-1950s up to the 1970s. My impression was that this term was created in the wake of the international neo-Platformist upsurge that began around 2000, and was therefore a new term used to describe a vague, and, upon

being ignorant of anarchist history is no longer plausibly excusable

closer inspection, rather incoherent set of organizational strategies (some of which might have dated back thirty years). The issue isn't one of semantics, however; I asked him to find any place where the FAU mentioned that they were pursuing a strategy called *especifismo* any time prior to 2000. Such a mention doesn't exist in any of the texts he referenced.

Another example is the claim that several Weather Underground prisoners moved closer to anarchism, either prior to their incarcerations or while in prison. There is no WU-linked documentation from the 1970s through today to support this claim, nor is there any such indication from the prisoners themselves; it all comes exclusively from their current anarchist supporters.⁹

Anarchist History

SO WHERE DOES THIS BRING US? Looking at the past without taking into consideration primary documents (books, essays, articles, pamphlets, letters) written at the times under examination is not how to do history. Wishing that influences and cross-pollinations didn't exist is not how to do history. Being ignorant of anarchist history is no longer plausibly

excusable; there are too many decent histories of anarchism (both in general and focused on particular places and events) that are easily available.

It's said that generals are always fighting the last war. A notable challenge for conscientious students of anarchist history is to avoid fighting the old battles using the same array of forces. After all, it is usually the victorious generals who use old strategies and tactics, and as we all know, anarchists don't have many victories worth replicating. Yet many anarchists — even those with more than just a rudimentary understanding and appreciation of history — often seem compelled to organize themselves into the same sorts of formations that brought defeat to anarchists in the past. The point of studying history is not to repeat, relive, or re-enact it; the point is to do better this time. **(A)**

Notes

- 1 When I say "we," I'm referring to anarchists.
- 2 Examining the importance of non-anarchist projects and people to anarchist history is beyond the scope of this column.
- 3 The fact remains that virtually all of the non-European anarchists they study started out by reading and translating European texts, and often meeting with European anarchists. This also fits in with the anti-intellectual Platformist line that anarchist consciousness springs up organically from the lived experiences of working class people — and therefore precedes, and has more importance, than the theorizing of philosophers; the possibility that cross-pollination between theorists and activists might have something to do with the development of ideas and practice is thereby excluded.
- 4 "To some comrades, I seemed more Kanaka than the Kanakas... The revolt of the tribes was deadly serious... The Kanakas were seeking the same liberty we had sought in the Commune..."

... continues on page 73

LETTERS

Science a Reliable Revealer of Truth?

DEAR ANARCHY,

Since so many "Anarchists" continue to pretend that (often incontrovertible) scientific facts are actually "scientific myths," I feel compelled to respond once again. At the most fundamental level, I firmly believe, Anarchy should be biocentric — before all else it should respect and attend to nature in *all* its manifestations. Humans are not separate from nature, as is implied by Marxism and is often implied by marxoid Anarchists — humans are a part of nature; nay, they are nature. Thus humans, and especially Anarchists, need to accept what nature actually is and how it really operates. To be Anarchists in the truest sense we must align our ideals and our lives with nature. We must — enthusiastically — obey natural "law." Only Marxists are so presumptuous as to imagine that we can overcome natural law.

Humans are, and have always been, *predators*. It doesn't matter whether Anarchists like this understanding of reality or not. It is how things "really" are. If anarchists like it or don't like it, that's their business — it's not the business of reality. If any Anarchist doesn't like how things are, they can begin to adjust to it. Otherwise they become irrelevant. The highest necessity is the totality of reality itself. There are exceptions to the (natural) laws which govern nature — Anarchists may take exception only to *human* laws. This includes sentimental Anarchists. Natural "laws" are completely universal and operate as an inter-connected unity from which we emerged. Certitude in the objectivity and total applicability of these "laws" is, in fact, our only hope for the future.

Our mental processes have evolved as they have precisely because

they correspond to realities in the world we inhabit. In other words, (most of) our cognitive predispositions are natural. This includes the human need for autonomy and dependence, a dichotomy that causes internal and external turmoil and lies at the root of our problem as Anarchists. Every organism of a high order suffers this dichotomy, since it is an entity in its own right and a part embedded within a larger whole. This dichotomy of independence and dependence creates difficulty in our self-consciousness for our innate integrative tendencies. This is the subject Alexander Pope struggled with in the third epistle of his *Essay on Man*. Physicist David Bohm coined the term *holonomy* — after philosopher Arthur Koestler's concept of an individuated whole that is part of a larger whole as a *holon* — to refer to the self-transcendence entailed in the balancing of autonomy and dependence in this consciousness which has evolved to a point where it struggles with its own nature.

As Anarchists, we are at the forefront of working out a balance between dependence and interdependence — between autarky and holarchy — and in this work we should look to Science rather than traditional Socialism. Is Anarchy to be scientific and thus empirical and natural, or is it to be marxoid and thus rationalistic and, as such, effectively *supernatural*? Tendencies which are innate, including those deeply etched into our psyche through eons of evolutionary process — *sociality and struggle, community and territoriality* — are genetically programmed at the very deep level in our brains to which Anarchy appeals most. If you want to create a social order "from scratch," you must first create nature. If you can't do that, then all meaningful options are constrained.

In their seemingly bottomless disregard for logic, most Anarchists have failed to comprehend the philosophical distinction between "analytic" and "synthetic" statements. In this conception, begun by Leibniz and popularized by Kant, logical statements are either *a priori* or *a posteriori*, i.e. definitional or empirical. In other words, a statement's truth-value lies in its internal consistency or its external validity. For example, if you tell me that your friend John is a married bachelor, I know *a priori* the statement is false because *by definition* a "bachelor" is an "unmarried man." If, on the other hand, you tell me your friend John is married to a Russian woman, I can verify the statement only *a posteriori*, by going to John's house (or the records at town hall, etc.) to *empirically* determine whether or not the (physical) facts fit the (linguistic) claim — whether John is married, and if so, to a Russian.

Disregarding this distinction, Anarchists can pretend that two concepts, "Anarchist policeman" and "Anarchist landowner," are *a priori* false — that both are *definitionally* invalid. In reality, however, the two concepts are, respectively, analytic and synthetic, and as such not subject to the same verification: an "Anarchist policeman" is impossible, since by definition an "Anarchist" means a person who believes in a policy of "no-rule." An Anarchist landowner, however, is not so clear-cut an image, and can only be validated or invalidated empirically.

Imagine that a thousand Anarchists moved to Alaska together, where homesteading is still possible, and collectively acquired 1000 acres of land in the wilderness. They agreed that the 1000-acre parcel would be an Anarchist homeland, to be collectively protected against interference from the outside but

adhere to a policy of no-rule inside. Then the Anarchists decided to divide the parcel into 1000 one-acre lots and each to take one and do with it what he or she wants. How would this "Anarchist landownership" violate a policy of "no-rule"?

Of course, clever marxists-*qua*-anarchists will assert that this "landownership must be (internally) enforced by rule," but this speciously ignores the fact that *all* no-rule policies are relative. Sure, it seems logical that some greedy Anarchist might try to misappropriate the land of others, requiring some "enforcement" of the original agreement which, it seems, could be interpreted as "rule." But what about rape? Would rape be allowed pursuant to "no-rule," or prohibited and punished? And what is the difference between enforcing a prohibition on trespassing on land and trespassing on body? The answer is simple: *there isn't one*. Ultimately, having to enforce an agreed-upon landownership would be a reflection of the Anarchists with which one associates — so also with rape — rather than a logical statement about the alleged "impossibility" of property in an anarchist society.

Many Anarchists claim, such as the prohibition on private property, are *inductive* conclusions which anarchists pretend are *deductive* conclusions — i.e., they are formed on the basis of (personal and/or historical) *experience* rather than on the basis of anarchic logic. The sun will rise tomorrow, a ball will fall if we release it, we inductively assume, based on the fact that the sun has always risen and the ball has always fallen, in the past. Such inductive reasoning is used to frame hypotheses based on observations. Thus, a state of affairs *b* has invariably been observed to follow *a* — but as Hume famously demonstrated, such reasoning can never truly

imply that *b* is a necessary consequence of *a*. We can conceive of a world where *a* occurs but *b* does not; there is no logically necessary connection between *a* and *b*.

Thus with Anarchy and property ownership. In the past, the private ownership of property has often led to some form of oppression. But it has not always done so — it is not a *logical* necessity; i.e., an *analytic* truism. Why, then, have Anarchists pretended that it is? Our enemies are quick to point out that in the past, Anarchy has often been synonymous with *chaos* — do we accept this (inductive) reasoning and reject Anarchy, or do we assert that we can certainly conceive of a world in which anarchy does not produce chaos?

The view that the state of the world at one moment automatically fixes its state at a later moment has a name: *determinism*. Is that what most anarchists are — the self-proclaimed torchbearers of “absolute freedom” and autarchy — in their hearts, determinists?! Is this why Anarchists cannot bring themselves to trust *other Anarchists* with property ownership? There is obviously an error in the current Anarchist thinking. Conclusions arrived at inductively are never absolutely secure in the logical manner of deductive conclusions, and most of the “common sense” of Anarchists is based on (incomplete) induction. Since we Anarchists are the first to insist that there is no logical reason why the (man-made) world may not be otherwise than it is, we should not succumb to such fallacies.

If we move from philosophical back to scientific thought, we may translate “analytic” and “synthetic” into *necessary* and *contingent* being. Something is “necessary” if it is what it is independent of anything else. Something is “contingent” if it could have been otherwise than the way it is, and thus is dependent on something else beyond itself. There are no necessary things in nature — all we encounter in the world, things and events, depend in some way on the rest of the world and history. The natural world is contingent. If Anarchy is naturalistic rather than supernatural, then, it too must be contingent and not subject

to requirements of those who make absolute proclamations.

The contingency of Anarchy is fourfold. First, the laws of nature or contingent. Second, humanity is naturalistic and diachronic, that is, evolutionary rather than rationalistic. Third, we know from history and anthropology that humanity is variegated — i.e., there is fundamental divergence in human predisposition. Finally, there is the fact that Anarchy, *per se*, is an ideal rather than a doctrine. It is only through recognizing the indissoluble bond between contingency and Anarchy that we can understand the distinctive connection between theory and practice which will characterize the next great advance in our agenda.

The declaration that property ownership is, *a priori*, prohibited is a political axiom — i.e., a *rule*. It deprives Anarchy of its synthetic/contingent nature so that it is no longer an empirical, *living* ideal, but becomes a branch of “political science,” and turns into something else — something reducing the properties of the world into the deductible application of political argument from “self-evident” premises: *marxoid*.

The science of anarchy is a question of emergent cooperation — nonlinear relations. One of the major principles elucidated in the scientific

“complexity theories” is the fact that complex behavior in systems can be produced without any hierarchy or central authority, and this includes the predator with territorial instincts we call “humanity.” This occurs utilizing what scientists call “local rules,” is bottom-up *heuristic* organization in which global behavior emerges autonomously out of local behavior.

Scientifically, then, anarchists are looking for levels of emergent social order that originate with grass-roots decisions and cascade upward, yielding self-organizational complexity. Systems theory has proven over and over again that with a careful choice of local behavior, global behavior of a desired sort can be generated without hierarchy or central authority. It is important for Anarchists to embrace science because what is required to maintain such self-organization is return, top-down communication between global and local levels, and this is the present difficulty thus far unsolved by scientists.

It is understood how local rules, guiding behavior of individual agents, produce global behavior. For example a flock of birds has no hierarchy or central authority, yet birds do not collide and the flock can maintain a desired destination. Every individual keeps a certain

distance and angle between neighboring birds (a “local rule”), and the collection of birds exhibits a characteristic “flocking behavior” (a “global rule”) based only on this — i.e., flocking “emerges.” What is still not understood is how global behavior can inversely guide local rules; flocks can somehow change destination, or even evolve new aims for flocking itself. Such changes entail the locally elected global order guiding the local. There is a mysterious recursive loop here that Anarchists could be crucial in comprehending.

Or will we continue to oppose science, our most reliable revealer of truth, as a tool of “bourgeois morals” and “statist control,” rather than taking it back?

Peter Georgarakos
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It's a Dirty Job But ...

TO THE COLLECTIVE OF
INDIVIDUALISTS:

It again falls to my lot, as with Murray Bookchin and Harold Barclay, to take to task an emeritus professor, Brian Morris, who is past his prime — although it's getting harder for me to find people to pick on who are older than I am. His

SOMETHING TO SAY?

We encourage thoughtful participation in this dialogue.

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very title, "Scientific Myths: Man the Mighty Hunter," is objectionable as applied to Robert Ardrey's Hunting Hypothesis. Ardrey was not an anthropologist or a scientist. He was a playwright and screenwriter. His script for "Khartoum" will long outlive *African Genesis*. No anthropologist ever took Ardrey seriously, unless you want to count Marshall Sahlins, who decided, if a playwright can impersonate an anthropologist, why can't an anthropologist impersonate a playwright? And so he wrote a witty play satirizing Ardrey.

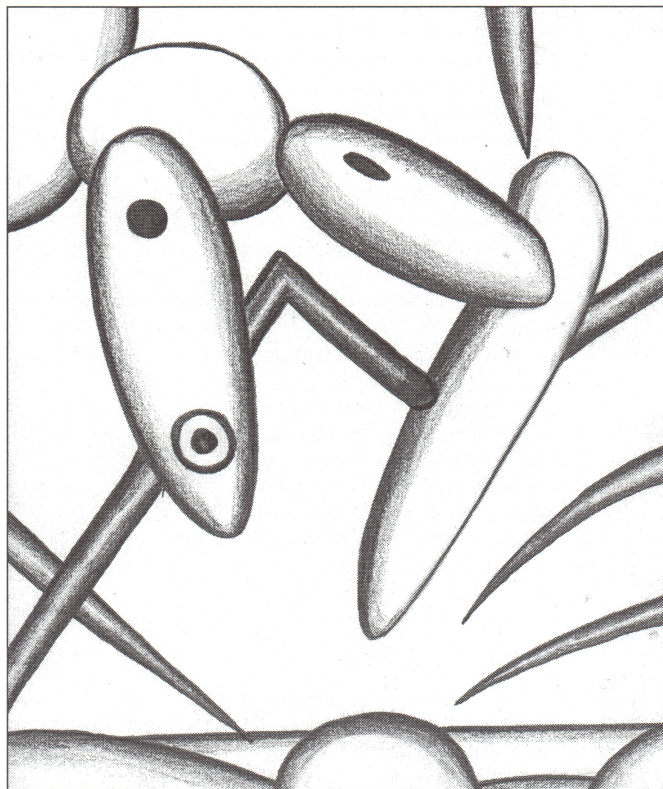
Morris quoted from the influential anthology *Man the Hunter* (1968) in a way that misleadingly associates it with Ardrey. This, by Julian Steward, is the only reference to Ardrey there: "The tendency toward territoriality is explainable by the ecological adaptations of various types of animals, rather than by some genetically determined possessiveness which Ardrey in sensational articles in *Life* represents as the basis of conflict in man."

Also misleading, and maliciously so, is Morris's turning Man the Hunter into "Man the Mighty Hunter," an allusion to "Nimrod, the mighty hunter" in the Book of Genesis (10: 9), as if the anthology's contributors were soulmates of the National Rifle Association. In fact the book was not devoted exclusively to male hunters. The articles referred to both hunters and to hunter-gatherers, at times interchangeably. A contribution by co-editor Richard B. Lee, "What Hunters Do for a Living," based on his soon to be famous work among the San (Bushmen), observed: "We have learned that in many societies, plant and marine resources are far more important than game animals in the diet." Vegetable foods gathered by women comprised 60-80% of the San diet. San men, he added, were not particularly good at hunting.

Ardrey espoused what has been derided as the "Killer Ape" hypothesis — that humans (men, that is) are by nature violent predators — from which he deduced further conclusions about hierarchy, territoriality, and female dependency which don't obviously follow even if the premiss were true. Morris

guilt-associates E.O. Wilson, an early exponent of what was then called sociobiology, with all of Ardrey's "themes," although Wilson — in a book (*On Human Nature*, 1978)

It isn't improved by the footnotes. True, Wilson's expertise is on insects, but Morris wrote a book about *Insects and Human Life* (2004). To speak of sociobiology as



published the year *before* Morris' polemic was published — *denied* that there was a "social aggressive instinct." Perhaps Morris had this injustice in mind when he wrote in his book *Anthropology of the Self* (1994): "Perhaps my criticisms of such scholars as Mary Douglas and Edward Wilson do read rather harshly and I may perhaps have misunderstood them, or failed to capture the full complexities of their work . . . in fact, I have nothing but admiration for these scholars . . ."

Even when it was published in 1979 in *The New Humanist* (to which, I believe, Wilson has also contributed), this article was not very good and not very necessary. It hasn't worn well, and by now Ardrey has even fewer books in print than I do. Yet Morris had a chance to fix it up and didn't.

"transparently reactionary" is transparently tendentious — shades of Lysenko! — and also out of date, as sociobiology developed into evolutionary psychology (to call it an "offshoot" is like calling biology an offshoot of natural history). It is scandalously respectable, as evidenced by so sober a tome as the *Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Perspectives on Violence, Homicide and War* (2012) whose 27 articles only rarely refer to Wilson and never refer to Ardrey.

If *Anarchy* has room for reprints of classic academic articles relevant to anarchism, there are better ones to choose from.

Cheers,

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Clarifying His Points?

I MADE A NUMBER OF PROBLEMATIC assumptions and claims within *After Post-Anarchism* (Repartee/LBC Books). I can not go over all of these problems, but I would nonetheless like to address a few of them. Alejandro de Acosta's recent review of my book (in AJODA) provided me with the opportunity to return to my thinking on these topics. Of course, I have long admired Alejandro's work for its vivacity and for his ability to rethink the sale dogmas of leftist anarchism. I believe that his "Anarchist Meditations," in particular, helped to inaugurate a new trend in post-anarchist thinking. So, my intention is not to critique his review of my book. Rather, I want to do one of two things: first, I want to provide a bit of a retrospective response to Alejandro's article, and; second, I want to highlight where my thinking has changed.

My problem during the time of writing *After Post-Anarchism* was that anarchist political philosophy seemed beset by a false choice between meta-ethical universalism and meta-ethical relativism. Post-anarchism's challenge to traditional anarchist philosophy was to shift the meta-ethical position from one which centered on *morality* toward one which centered on *ethics*. Consequently, the implicit political practice concerned *tactics* rather than *strategy*. The traditionalists were concerned by post-anarchism because notion of Revolution had been exchanged for temporary, selective, gains across a number of micro-political registers. Thus, criticisms from traditionalists such as Sasha K and Benjamin Franks involved an attack on post-anarchism for being "post-Revolution" and "post-class" (respectively). Indeed, one of the earliest post-anarchists within the scholarly world was Andrew Koch and his argument was that anarchists needed to follow Stirner and Nietzsche's example by embracing epistemological pluralism against the ontological essentialism of traditional anarchism. Furthermore, in Saul Newman's work we can find

calls for a "radical democracy" and so on.

Thereafter, post-anarchism was erected as a body of thought which forever found all ontological projects suspect. Ontological projects were always thought to be inherently *authoritarian, representative, fixed, and essentialist*. All postanarchist projects embraced epistemological claims about a multiplicity of truth claims within the general game of language and communication. Post-anarchism became something like anarchisms' discursive play-ground. In *After Post-Anarchism*, I wanted to push post-anarchism a little bit further and allow it to have its own non authoritarian ontological project — one which was neither universalist nor relativist. I found that the best way to do this was to partake in the "meat-grinder technique" (to borrow a phrase from Shawn Wilbur) of jamming non-anarchist philosophers into the postanarchist grinder and publishing the result. Whereas Todd May's work seemed to champion the works of Foucault, Deleuze, and Ranciere, and Saul Newman's championed the work of Lacan, my ontological project was indebted to Bataille's laws of the general economy. I believed that there could be a distinctively anarchist "general state" which would oppose itself to restrictive state economies. In the end, this general state was metaphysical insofar as it embraced the nihilist third-way — it was neither universalist nor relativist — and rejected the subject as the point of departure for its politics. The nihilist third-way operated on many scales and could easily be conceived of as a project of *negation*. This was the secret solidarity that I believed always existed between anarchism and meta-ethical nihilism: anarchisms' core was the negation. Negation, in my book, was (1) a subjective project which brought the anarchist in line with the anarchist state, and (2) it was a non-subjective project inasmuch as it operated according to its own laws and provoked the subject from the absolute alterity of *anarchy*.

I note with interest the tension that exists between epistemology and ontology, between the *existence*

of the human animal and *being*. Upon reflection, it seems to me that I was operating within a provisional dialectic which reduced either position to its other. In other words, either the world was reduced entirely to a multiplicity of language games or it was reduced to the pure negativity of being. Within the former project there was little hope for political change because it remained within the repetition of the world of capitalism, ever securing fleeting degrees of freedom within the interstices of restrictive power games, and so on. Within the latter project, there was the problem of *being* short-sighted. Nihilism, as the latter project, is the proper place to begin because it rejects the banal repetitions of the traditional games of power but it also naively promotes a direct connection with the anarchist state. Anarchism, then, remains trapped within a form of mysticism. The old epistemological project cleaved to the pole of a strange sort of positivism: positivists, according to Alain Badiou (who uses the word very broadly), naively believe that certain types of knowledge exhaust all of the possibilities of *being*. And, to repeat myself, the new ontological project cleaved to the pole of mysticism. So we have a tension *within anarchism* between positivism and nihilism, and between positivism and mysticism. Today my hope is that we can rescue anarchism's nihilism from mysticism.

Anarchism is *only a beginning* precisely because *its core is the negation*. If it is to return to its Revolutionary roots renewed then it will require some sort of affirmative position. This is what post-anarchism ought to have offered the anarchist tradition. Whilst introducing myself to Slavoj Žižek last summer, he interrupted to ask me: "What is post-anarchism? [...] Is that when the anarchists finally take control of the state?" In many ways, I believe he is correct. But certainly not for any authoritarian reasons. I believe that anarchists must take control of the *general state* and affirm a new tradition for themselves. Those who have read my book know that the general state is not a political state because the latter is actually only

a restrictive state. What Alejandro missed in my book was the part about the *general economy/state* which is not reducible to the *will* or inter-activity of human animals. In many ways Alejandro was seduced by the claim that an ethics is something we, as human animals, willfully hold onto. But I wanted to make the case that meta-ethics — unlike ethics *proper* is something that describes (1) the place from which our ethics derive and (2) the process through which these ethics become manifest in the world. Of course, I answered negatively to both: ethics derive from a *non-place* (something like a constitutive lack) and are validated as truth-claims through a *non-process* (skepticism, for example). I thus opened up a source of contingency and thereby displaced the human animal from his place of privilege in anarchist political philosophy.

Today I want to argue that this is the philosophical position that we ought to *being* with (i.e., nihilism, or the position outlined in my

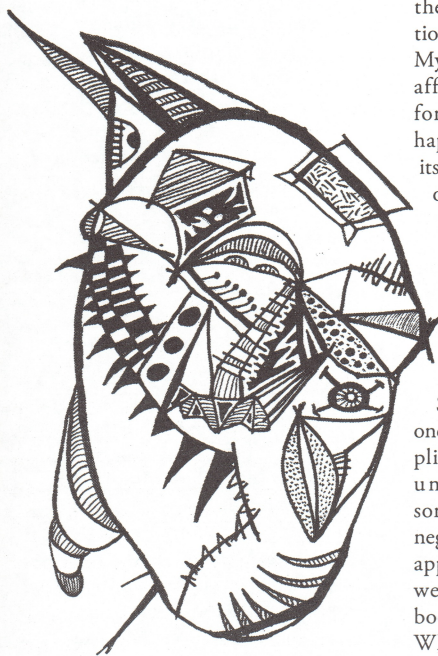
at this point is to continue to open up these *beginnings* even while encouraging others to pass through them and toward their own affirmations. We need anarchism to open itself up to others as an institution capable of radicalizing them and then sending them back into the ordinary world thus changed. Moreover, we need to do this in such a way that those who go back into the world changed are nevertheless ostracized by the institution which radicalized them in the first place. In my view, anarchism is not a *social club*, it is a *dogma*. And its philosophical dogma is to destroy the subjects of the old world and replace them with subjects ready for the new world. Anarchism needs to prepare people for the future by making them Agents of the Future. Perhaps that was why the nihilists of the Russian Revolution called themselves the "New People" — or why the Dupont's once referred to themselves as Agents of the Future. Nihilist Anarchists are those who have given up on the world as it



book), but it is not the position that we ought to end with. Anarchists have long been within the phase of *only beginning*. If we are serious about Revolution then it is time that we do more than *only begin*. However, I haven't the faintest idea what that actually means. It seems to me that the best option we have

exists and are awaiting further instructions. In other words, Nihilist Anarchists have already begun but they still need to give a name to the new world.

This is why the Revolutionary Catechism of Sergey Nechayev ought to be revived as a foundation document of anarchism. Not



there have been plenty of affirmations within the anarchist tradition. My claim is that all of the traditional affirmations are simply inadequate for our situation today (and perhaps even for the historic situation itself). They operated upon a model of power which presumed the supremacy of the restrictive state.

Duane Rousselle

Guns, Jews and Spiel

DEAR AJODA,

Some comments. The cover, for one, is a good beginning — uncomplicated, starkly prescient. Clean, uncluttered pages also, with some fine sketchings. One or two negatives (to me) though: it was disappointing to look in vain for the well-recommended Ardent Press book review “Enemies of Society.” Where was it? Online only? Shame, I would like to have caught a piece of it. And only two reader contributions, neither of them pushing any kind of anarchist critique. Feedback from readers magnifies the range of debate/dialogue/discussion content of any journal. As I used to say in the AF [ed note: Anarchist Federation] regarding the lack of letters featured in *Organise*, it’s all a bit one-way, top-down, even if unintended without reader input. Other than those couple of points it makes for a pretty lively issue, as ever, no question about that. Good work and great to sense the determination to remain with the printed page format.

I would just like to offer up a couple of observations touched on in 1. the editorial and 2. the review of the *Dysophia* pamphlet on Anti-Semitism (which I will be sending for shortly).

1. Gun control. I’m anti-gun myself, so a point or two to reflect on: The Charles Whitman/Texas Uni mass shooting in the ‘60s. Would armed civilians — students? — have been able to have prevented the incident from happening? Move this scenario on over to the Kent State Uni killings by cops/National Guards in the same decade: what would have been the reactions of an armed corpus of students/civilians? Would this have resulted in a

“better” outcome? Do guns solve anything? Are they not the ultimate symbol of authoritarianism, the guy pulling the trigger judge, jury and executioner? Or further shift the scene to the tensions in Palestine between Israel and the displaced Palestinian population. Would it be a good idea for the latter to be armed in the name of self-defense? Wouldn’t it simply exacerbate and already desperate situation? I’m sure you can think of many instances where the carrying of guns generally is a potential nightmare... Who wins every time? The might of the state, now and forever. And there’s too many people *not with us* outside of an insurrectionary era to posit the carrying of guns as an act in our favor. Why have we anarchists become so fixed on engaging the state in tit-for-tat responses? Surely we can come up with something better than that and should show ourselves to be better. The major flaw across the anarchist spectrum in my experience has always been the near total, utter unwillingness to look within ourselves and see what needs to be changed, what can be changed within our mindset that would improve the human condition. All this “we can do more tough shit to them than they can do to us” posturing isn’t worthy of us really. There is precious little, as far as I can see, on the trigger end of a gun that effects rational behaviour. Sorry, this is starting to feel like a rant and it wasn’t meant to be that way... I’ll leave it there, see what you think...

2. No question that antisemitism in all its manifestations is a form of racism. No disagreement there whatsoever. The query I have has been prompted by your comment in the *Dysophia* review that antizionists are virtually to be considered as antisemites as well. Personally I have never studied or looked into all that deeply what is generally known as Zionism, so I’m looking for a bit of guidance here. My quite limited understanding of Zionism is that it is a religious and political theocracy. And if it is, how is that defensible from an anarchist perspective? Surely it cannot be (neo)racist to challenge a dogmatic — authoritarian at that — creed based on belief? I’d be grateful if

you can enlighten me. I would just say that to the onlooker, someone with no ideological allegiance to any of the contesting factions involved in the Israel/Palestine conflict, it is hard not to see the transgressor as the former and the oppressed/occupied as the latter. That would seem to be the starting point for most neutrals, rightly or wrongly. It doesn’t necessarily translate into antisemitism I would hope.

FD, England

Lawrence responds:

We agree that reader contributions in the form of letters is a vitally important part of publishing a journal.

We didn’t hide or misplace or otherwise ignore communications from our readers; lamentably, the letters we printed last time were the only ones we received. Thankfully, this time we have plenty more. So to all our readers: don’t be stingy with your opinions and responses! We print all letters sent to us.

My point was not that armed civilians could have prevented Whitman from his killing spree, but that they effectively ended it. The issue of government control of gun availability is a peculiar American issue, and one that isn’t easy for many non-Americans to understand. In many ways, those of us who live on the West Coast still have some (mostly mythological) Wild West cultural baggage, where interpersonal violence is condoned — and often expected — as a mechanism of conflict resolution. California is noted for its generally progressive politics, but maintains capital punishment, as does every state (but four) west of the Mississippi. Regardless of the current incarnation of gun control as a legislative device to disarm recently freed slaves during Reconstruction, liberals and most leftists refuse to see it as a means of maintaining an explicitly racist dimension within a more banally authoritarian regime. Here I’m not falling for the ridiculous rhetoric of right-wing gun fans about an armed population being the only thing that stands in the way of government tyranny. The tyranny of government is not an exceptional condition; nor do I believe that an armed population guarantees that the state will not be able to extend it. But the idea that only

because of its meta-ethical consequentialism but because of its attempt to *begin* with the absolute destruction of subjectivity. Before writing his *Ethics*, Kropotkin wrote:

After a long period of slumber comes a moment of awakening. Then thought frees herself from the chains [...] She shatters the chains. She subjects to severe criticism all that has been taught her, and lays bare the emptiness of the religious political, legal, and social prejudices which she has vegetated. She starts research in new paths, enriches our knowledge with new discoveries, creates new sciences.

I realize that I haven’t offered any specific answers. I have merely stated that the *negation*, being anarchisms’ core, is simply not good enough to constitute a philosophical position. That is how my position has changed. That was *only my beginning*. I remain convinced of the necessity of thinking anarchism as a nihilistic meta-ethical system at its core, however I now believe that we need to begin to take seriously the necessity of an anarchist notion of affirmation. We need research in new paths. We need new discoveries and new sciences. In a word, we need a new affirmation. To be sure,

state-sanctioned bullies have the legal right to be armed is unacceptable. In addition, I did not call for armed confrontations with the state, or for any kind of armed struggle option. This self-defeating strategy is amply demonstrated by the experiences of the Weather Underground, the RAF, and various lesser-known urban guerrilla groupings of the 1970s and '80s.

As for the equation of antisemitism and anti-zionism, I make no such claim. What I said was that too often the unexamined prejudices of (especially Leftist) anti-zionists echo anti-Jewish canards of past centuries. I suspect much of that is unconscious, but there are certainly examples of people who should know better invoking typical antisemitic caricatures. Enumerating every example would be tedious, but alleging disproportionate power/influence, especially over the foreign policy of the US government, tops the list — as if the removal of this alleged influence would magically allow US foreign policy to return to some stellar example of enlightened and benevolent diplomacy (see Cockburn and St. Clair's "The Politics of Anti-Semitism," reviewed in #58, especially the chapter by former CIA officers(!)) — along with the assumption that an eastern European Jewish surname is sufficient proof, not only of access to that disproportionate influence, but also of a specifically bellicose political agenda (a spread from *Adbusters* was probably the worst example of this, conflating neo-cons with a specifically Jewish agenda. See radicalarchives.org/2011/10/20/lasnadbusters-helps-you-find-the-jews/).

Yay!

AT MY AGE, YOU WONDER IF YOU'LL outlive your subscription, but here's to the anarchist imagination!

Ron Sakolsky

More Yay!

I DON'T WANT TO MISS A SINGLE ISSUE. It's one of my favorite magazines.

WT, Texas

You Want That à la Mode?

GREETINGS,

Since I participate in producing a publication, I know how easy it is to have a detail slip by. You left out our publication (*Fifth Estate*) from your list of those which exchange with *AJODA* in your new edition. Our new issue will be coming to you soon. Thanks.

Also, I was reading through your well-deserved harsh review of *The Beginning of the American Fall*, and one of the footnotes gave me pause. You state that Lierre Keith's account of being pied was dishonest. We reported in the *Fifth Estate* that she claimed damage to her eyes for days (her calling the cops aside; was she going to prosecute them?) as a result of being hit with a cayenne-laced pie. Can you give me a quick story on this? Thanks.

Peter Werbe, MI

Lawrence responds: Yes, Keith was pied, and yes, the first thing she said after recovering from the shock of the assault was "somebody call the cops," and it was almost certainly her intention to file assault and battery charges. As an experienced EMT who has been called to flush the eyes of a pepper-sprayed arrestee on too many occasions (as well as doing some as a street medic), it is my professional opinion that the signs of Keith's physical distress were not consistent with any of her mucosa forced into contact with anything like cayenne powder, hot sauce, or pepper spray (the chemical agent changes depending on who's repeating the story). There was no visible swelling or irritation other than what you would expect from being hit in the face with something squishy that got into your eyes. The photo here was taken as she was giving a report to the cops, approximately 20 minutes after the assault.

If there had been some sort of chemical irritant in one or more of the pies, it didn't visibly affect her by then; cayenne, whether powder or an oil suspension, affects you



immediately (often to the point of incapacity). Clearly she had already had her eyes flushed (notice her wet hair) repeatedly with water, but water will only make it so that your eyes stop spontaneous tearing and so they won't swell shut. Even after 10-15 minutes of flushing with cool water to the point that tears stop, the mucosa will be quite visibly swollen and/or reddened. Even when you make the mistake (like I've done on more than one occasion) of cutting hot peppers for a spicy dish and then rubbing your finger (even lightly) against your eye or nose, you will experience irritation, swelling, and watering of the eyes. The oil is what does that, and it's not really water soluble (which is why you're supposed to drink beer instead of water after ingesting too much). The allegations that Keith was hit with chemical-laced pies is a way to increase her status of innocent victim. I am not a supporter of the vegan fanatics who pied her, but neither am I a supporter of people who lie or exaggerate to increase people's outrage. Hope that clears up at least part of the story.

It's More Complex Than You Think

THE CAPITALIST MASTERS RUNNING the spectacle, the Scum-In-Charge of the Kleptocracy (SICK), are very adept at manipulating reality through the manipulation of the language we use. Thus, they have created the shibboleth of the "Prison Industrial Complex." A misnomer that did not originate among prisoners inside America's prisons, which has little to do with what really goes on behind these walls and fences.

This misnomer deceives people into thinking prisons are a productive industry when, to the contrary, all they do is take away money from government programs that benefit people and their communities — education, healthcare, job creation, infrastructure, etc. — thus, facilitating the infamous school-to-prison pipeline currently decimating poor, predominantly minority, communities across America.

Basically, the capitalist system controls the manufacture, delivery,

sales, and storage of commodities. In the context of Milton Friedman's Chicago School economics — *soi disant* laissez-faire that amounts to a state-sanctioned free trade free-for-all of unregulated businesses, the largest of which are contradictorily supported by billions in tax-dollar subsidies — it serves the agenda of the state to mislabel the massive warehousing of 2.3 million human beings in America as a "Prison Industrial Complex." Thereby, implying it's a business when, in fact, it is a sickening system of human warehousing, with prisoners categorized according to multiple levels of control — minimum, medium, maximum and super-maximum. The reality is prisoners plus minimal programs, jobs and rehabilitation equals a Prisoner Warehousing System.

One could say the justice system manufactures prisoners, when it strips millions of American citizens of their rights by sentencing them to prison, but mostly it's just selling them out behind the facade of due process. It's common knowledge the majority of prisoners' so-called crimes are drug-related, with widely used, easily obtainable drugs like marijuana made illegal to preserve the monopolies of the alcohol, tobacco and pharmaceutical industries. However, the primary reason these drugs were outlawed was to enable the SICK to hold the hammer of the justice system over the heads of a significant portion of the population predisposed to use the outlawed drugs, creating a threat and a distraction, while they loot the planet of resources and rob us of the fruits of our labor. In sum, they label us "criminals when, in fact, they're the criminals. Certainly, there are few more criminal than the likes of Bill Gates, Lloyd Blankfein or the Waltons, or criminal gangs bigger than the U. S. military and Homeland Security. To be clear, the justice system could arguably be considered a "Prisoner Industrial Complex" because it manufactures prisoners, but it's arguable the prison system, run by the federal Bureau of Prisons and various states' Departments of Corrections, can only be considered a Prisoner Warehousing System

because “warehousing” is what it does. Something prisoners have long known and it’s time those outside of these walls and fences know it as well.

For example, the Pelican Bay State Prison — Security Housing Unit (PBSP-SHU) Short Corridor Collective Representatives’ 5 September 2013 notice of the suspension of their recent hunger-strike states: “Those in power promote *mass warehousing* to justify more guards, more tax dollars for ‘security,’ and spend more pennies for rehabilitation...” Drawing an identical conclusion, Michelle Alexander, the author of *The New Jim Crow*, stated in a February *New York Times* article that: “for the prison system to *warehouse human beings*, prisoners must cease, in the minds of the public, to be human beings.” (Emphasis supplied.) Further, the U.S. Supreme Court explicitly recognized the warehousing of California’s prisoners in its decision in *Brown v. Plata*, 131 S.Ct. 1910 (2011).

Unable to convince those inside prisons they’re part of a so-called “Prison Industrial Complex,” the state seeks to convince everyone else that prisons in America are just bustling with productivity. A sure sign is its repeated use, ad nauseam, in the mainstream media and, unfortunately, by some in the alternative media, in a concerted effort to sell the fiction that prisons are profitable, when nothing could be further from the truth.

Regardless of the media clamor from some on the left about an expanding prison “industry” behemoth, the percentage of America’s 2.3 million prisoners that are employed is decreasing, with less than 5% employed in manufacturing. Most prisoners don’t have jobs, while those who do earn a \$1 a day, less, or nothing at all, at jobs involving a prison’s operation — custodial, maintenance, laundry, foodservice, grounds-keeping, etc. Since, there’s no way the state can profit from this labor except in reduced operational costs, why aren’t the taxpayers benefiting? “Report: Total State Prison

Costs at Least \$5.4 billion Over Budget Nationwide,” PLN, April 2013, pp 12-13.

This year California’s Prison Industry Board (PIB) reported that California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA) lost \$24 million in two years while employing approximately 7,000, out of 133,000 (now 120,000), prisoners in “manufacturing, service, and consumable factories” at 24 facilities. As “service” does not constitute manufacturing, this is less than 4% of California’s prisoners. “California Prison Authority Loses \$24 million in Last Two Years but Reduces Recidivism,” PLN, April 2013, p 56. In June 2009, a report revealed the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) Bureau of Correctional Industries (BCI) lost over \$7 million between 2004 and 2008. Michigan Office of the Auditor

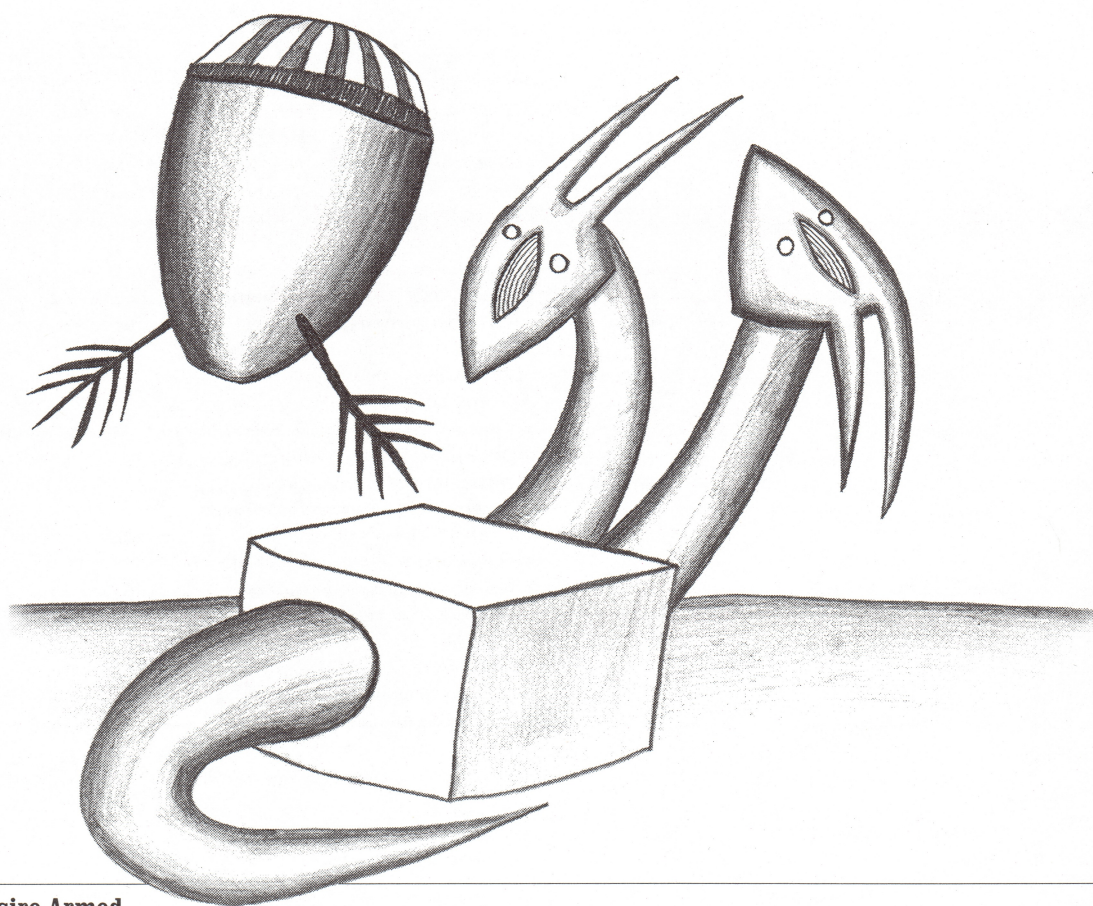
General, “Performance Audit of the Bureau of Correctional Industries, Department of Corrections,” June 2009. This “industry” primarily manufactures and launders prisoner clothing, and employs less than 2% of Michigan’s 43,000 prisoners.

The facts do not support the existence of a “Prison Industrial Complex” within the meaning of those words. The definition of *industrial* is “of or relating to industry.” The primary definition of *industry* is “the commercial production and sale of goods,” with the secondary and tertiary definitions emphasizing manufacturing. *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 4th Ed. (2000), p 895. The definition of *complex* is “consisting of interconnected or interwoven parts, composed of two or more units.” *Ibid.* p 377.

Consequently, former president

Dwight D. Eisenhower’s much-vaunted “Military Industrial Complex” is correctly applied to the interwoven parts of military equipment manufacturers and the American military, which buys and uses the equipment, while “Prison Industrial Complex” is incorrectly applied to prisons which manufacture little or nothing and, therefore, cannot be interwoven with a buyer or consumer in a “complex.” State and media notwithstanding, all those opposed to the corporate terrorist state’s warehousing of prisoners should stop calling it what it isn’t — a “Prison Industrial Complex” — and start calling it what it is — a Prisoner Warehousing System.

Rand Gould C-187131
Thumb Correctional Facility
3225 John Conley Dr
Lapeer, MI 48446



8 Theses *continued from page 37*

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Brooklyn NY 11211
Publisher of radical books

Avtonom

PO Box 13
Moscow 109028, Russia
Direct action and protest news with information on various repressions

Buletino Archivio G. Pinelli

via Roverto 27
20127 Milano, Italy
Italian-language bulletin focusing on anarchist history; also a public archive

Bureau of Public Secrets

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Berkeley CA 94701
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Bulletin du CIRA

Avenue de Beaumont 24
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CNT

Pza. Tirso de Molina
28012 Madrid, Spain
Spanish-language newspaper of the anarcho-syndicalist CNT

Collectif Hors d'Ordre

64, rue de Maisonneuve, app.4
Quebec PQ G1R 2C3, Canada
Publishers of the occasional French-language semi-primitivist/semi-insurrectionary *Mauvaise Herbe*

Ekintza Zuzena

Apdo 235, Postakutxa
48080 Bilbo Bizkaia, Spain
Spanish- and Euzkara-language quarterly journal of culture and anarchism

La Fabrique

64 rue Rébeval
75019 Paris, France
Publishers of the French-language works of Tiqqun and the Invisible Committee

Fifth Estate

PO Box 201016
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84b Whitechapel Hight St
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Longest-running rather dull English anarchist journal, now a monthly

Industrial Worker

PO Box 180195
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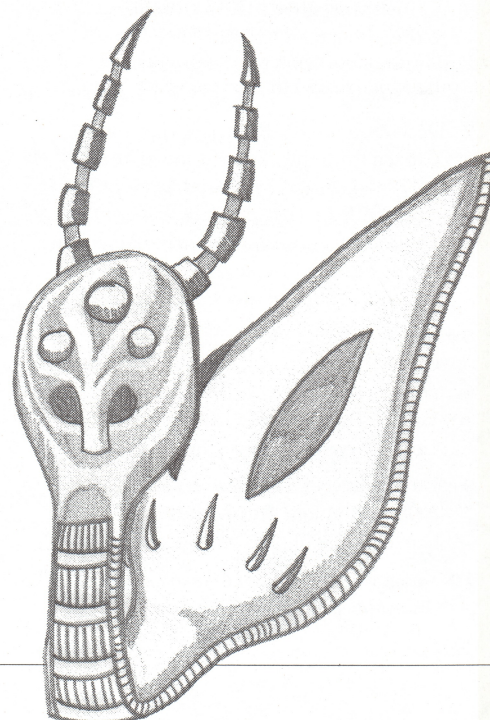
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A journal that tries to bridge the gap
between grad students and street
activism, tending quite unfortunately
toward Popular Frontism.

What's the Use of History?

continued from page 63

(*The Red Virgin: Memoirs of Louise Michel*,
ed. Bullitt Lowry and Elizabeth Gunter;
University of Alabama Press, 1981); p. 112.

- 5 "...he came to Egypt in 1882 for a rev-
olutionary purpose connected with the
natives' revolt..." (*Malatesta: His Life and
Ideas*, ed. Vernon Richards; Freedom Press,
1977); p. 229.
- 6 "IWW membership rolls included workers
of all occupations, skill levels, races, and
national backgrounds." (*Encyclopedia of
the American Left*, ed. Mari Jo Buhle, Paul
Buhle, Dan Georgakas; Oxford University
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labor union unconditionally committed,
in theory and in practice, to racial and
sexual equality." ("Beautiful Losers: The
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essays "They Who Marry Do Ill" and "Sex
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Spain*, by Martha Ackelsberg (Indiana
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- 8 "That the anarchist groups (FAI), together
with the CNT sections in the Protectorate
of Morocco, will seek an alliance with the
Moroccan nationalist forces in order to
jointly defeat the military stationed there..."
(*The Story of the Iron Column*, by Abel Paz;
AK Press/Kate Sharpley Library, 2011); p 6,
quoting a resolution passed at the Zaragoza
Congress of May, 1936. "A delegation of the
national committee of Morocco... started
negotiations with the Committee of Anti-
Fascist Militias [at that time, still largely
led by the CNT]..." Report of Vladimir
Antonov-Ovseyenko, Soviet consul-general
in Barcelona, dispatched October 6, 1936,
quoted in *The Battle for Spain*, by Antony
Bevor (Penguin, 2006); pp 155-156.
- 9 To be clear: I am not saying that non-an-
archist prisoners should not be supported
by anarchists; people choose to support
whomever they prefer. The issue for me is
that such support should probably avoid a
public assertion about the alleged anarchist
credentials of prisoners who showed no
interest in anarchism prior to their contacts
with anarchist supporters.

websites we like

year0.org

blog.occupiedlondon.org

theanarchistlibrary.org

www.katesharpleylibrary.net

anarchistnews.org

How Well Do You Know Your Anarchist History?

Mark ☒ all that apply or write in your own answers.

1. Who is the first person to use the term anarchist?

- ☐ A. The FBI
- ☐ B. The Wobblies
- ☐ C. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon
- ☐ D. Who the fuck cares?

2. Who on this list is not an anarchist?

- ☐ A. Praxides Guerrero
- ☐ B. Voltarine De Cleyre
- ☐ C. Murray Bookchin
- ☐ D. Osugi Sakae

3. What is the date and target of the 1st anarchist bombing?

- ☐ A. Why would you bring this up?
- ☐ B. Those weren't anarchists
- ☐ C. Santiago Salvador, Nov 7 1893: Liceu Theatre in Barcelona
- ☐ D. What kind of explosive did they use?

4. The first woman to declare herself an anarchist?

- ☐ A. Hardly seems relevant
- ☐ B. We need to recruit more of them
- ☐ C. Probably Nathalie Lemel
- ☐ D. Yeah, but what did she do?

5. Anarchism draws on the philosophies of:

- ☐ A. Sociopaths
- ☐ B. Nature and peaceful coexistence
- ☐ C. Max Stirner, William Godwin & Diogenes of Sinope
- ☐ D. Only other anarchists you fool!

6. Date and target of the first anarchist assassination attempt:

- ☐ A. You are sick
- ☐ B. Assassinations are not anarchist
- ☐ C. Max Hödel, May 11 1878; Kaiser Wilhelm I
- ☐ D. Um, didn't someone shoot a president once?

7. Which was an anarchist group?

- ☐ A. Weather Underground
- ☐ B. Situationists
- ☐ C. Argentine Regional Workers' Federation
- ☐ D. Nihilists

8. The most successful anarchist insurgency was:

- ☐ A. No such thing exists
- ☐ B. We don't do that anymore
- ☐ C. The Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine
- ☐ D. ME!

9. Best source of anarchist historical information now?

- ☐ A. Murray Bookchin
- ☐ B. The internet
- ☐ C. Kate Sharpley Library
- ☐ D. History is boring

10. Your favorite historical anarchist document is:

- ☐ A. Organizational Platform of the General Union of Anarchists
- ☐ B. The Conquest of Violence
- ☐ C. Free Women of Spain
- ☐ D. Anarchist Cookbook

Key For Issue 74

For all questions, give yourself 1 point for choosing "A", 2 for "B", 3 for "C", or 4 points for "D". If you checked more than one answer for a question, give yourself the average value of the two answers.

If you wrote in your own answers, subtract 1 point for each extra answer; you are unconfined by our bubbles!

Add all your points together for the survey. Use the chart below to see where you fall on our scale.

Totals	"How Ready Are You For The Collapse?"
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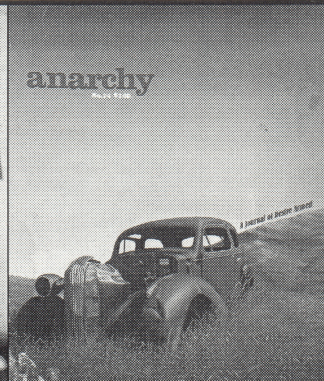
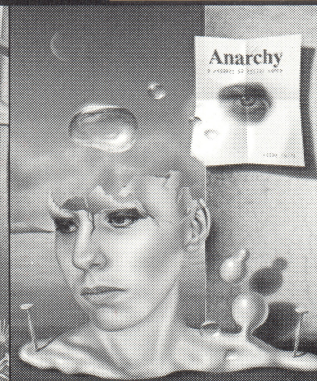
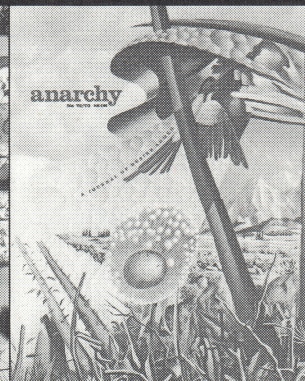
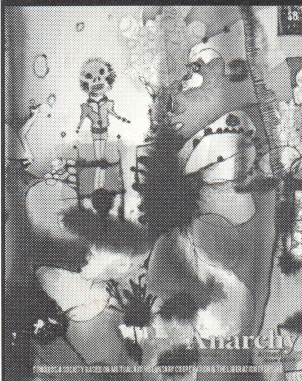
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